

**THE BOOK WAS
DRENCHED**

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_I 166003

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Call No 173 NS3-N. Accession No. 16626

Author Newsom, J. E.

Title New Morality 1933

This book should be returned on or before the date last marked below.

THE NEW MORALITY

THE NEW MORALITY

BY

G. E. NEWSOM

*Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, and
Chaplain to His Majesty the King*

IVOR NICHOLSON & WATSON LTD.
44 ESSEX STREET, STRAND. W.C.

1933

<i>First Published</i>	<i>September, 1932</i>
<i>Reprinted</i>	<i>September, 1932</i>
<i>Reprinted</i>	<i>October, 1932</i>
<i>Reprinted</i>	<i>February, 1933</i>

*Made and Printed in Great Britain by C. Tinsling & Co., Ltd.,
Liverpool, London and Prescott.*

PARENTIBUS UXORI
LIBERIS

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
PREFACE	9
I. INTRODUCTION	11
II. THE TRADITION OF THE HOME .	24
III. THE NEW MORALITY	49
IV. BIOLOGY	58
V. ANTHROPOLOGY	70
VI. THE TROBRIAND ISLANDERS .	83
VII. PRIMITIVE MAN	94
VIII. HISTORY	111
IX. THE PARENTAL IMPULSE . .	124
X. THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES	146
XI. THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD	162
XII. THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD (<i>continued</i>)	180
XIII. A LOW ESTIMATE OF HUMAN NATURE	194
XIV. OF HUMAN MORALITY . . .	206
XV. OF SOCIAL LIFE	223

CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
XVI. AND OF CIVILISATION . . .	241
XVII. THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY . . .	256
XVIII. A BETTER HOPE . . .	275
XIX. A BETTER HOPE (<i>continued</i>) .	293
APPENDIX A.	
RATIONALISM AND MECHANISM .	311
APPENDIX B.	
MORALITY AND PSYCHOLOGY .	317

PREFACE

THIS Essay owes its origin to a chance meeting. In August, 1930, I met a lady engaged in social work who told me some of her friends had been made uneasy in their minds by the propaganda of the New Morality. She wished someone would examine this system of thought and make clear what it involves. Wisely or unwisely I felt that I ought to do what I could in response to this appeal.

The two main points of the New Morality I find to be clear.

(1) Nothing should be allowed to interfere with the freedom of sex-life. If the ideals of family-life stand in the way of this freedom, the family must be mended or ended.

(2) The ideal of sexual freedom is in harmony with the progress of modern science and civilisation.

On none of the problems that surround these points am I able to write as an expert or for experts : but I have tried to see them in the light of that

PREFACE

commonsense philosophy which I have learned to admire in those who give their lives to social and administrative work among the people. My aim has been to shew that those who believe in the ethical value of the family need not fear that either modern science or modern social philosophy has made this value to be of less account than it was before.*

G. E. NEWSOM,

Selwyn College.

April, 1932.

* For a brief scientific treatment of such matters as the physiology and psychology of sex, courtship, marriage, birth-control, etc., which are beyond the scope of the present essay, see *Preparation for Marriage* (Jonathan Cape, 1932), a Handbook prepared by a group of well-known specialists, on behalf of the British Social Hygiene Council.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE distinguishing feature of the New Morality is its attitude towards the social institution of the Family. That is what marks it off from older versions of the doctrine of "free love," and justifies its claim to the title of New. There may be less justification for its claim to be a Morality.

The high morality* of sex which we have inherited was established on the principle, approved as men said by law both natural and divine, that sex-life, including courtship and marriage, was for the end of family-life. There was a natural social purpose in sex. It seemed clear that Nature meant human life to be created and nurtured in a family in which sex and parenthood were bound together. In these latter days Biology has re-inforced this belief: for it has shewn the monogamous family to be a product of the last and highest stage in the long story of Animal Evolution, a stage closely linked with the later stage at which the Human emerged from the Animal. After a preparation during incalculable years of development, Nature seems to have given man his start equipped with the instincts

* If we may so use the term, taking a hint from Mr. Walter Lippmann's "high religion" which, by the way, seems to be a religion without an object of worship.

THE NEW MORALITY

of the monogamous family. If we may suppose any kind of meaning or purpose to be moving in the story of Evolution, we ought not to be very wide of the mark in supposing that the life of the monogamous family is a life in harmony with the meaning and purpose of human nature. Founded on this ancient belief, which now receives a new force from biology, the high morality of sex was developed and is still in process of development. It always taught that sex was essentially a function of the family and that there was a whole world of meaning and value in the family ; that the relation of husband and wife was the highest and completest form of personal union ; that this union, if anything at all were sacred, was sacred not only in itself but also in its character as the creative source of life, individual and social ; that the family was the original and fundamental institution of human society, the vehicle by which vital tradition was passed on from generation to generation, the nursery of all social virtues, the only safeguard of the deeper values of human life against the vulgarities of license, and of course the very home of religion. It has been the central doctrine of this high morality of sex that the maintenance of the married union and the integrity of the family were worthy to be served with absolute loyalty, and that nothing was more unworthy than to endanger it by giving way to wandering sexual desires. Married honour meant that husband and wife

INTRODUCTION

were trusted by each other, and by society, state, church, to be true ; and that this great and open trust could not be violated without dishonour. As regards the unmarried, they, too, were on their honour to keep body and soul worthy of the trust that one day should be given to them.

It is the aim of the New Morality to demonstrate that this whole tradition offends against the natural rights of sexual love. At all costs, so we are told, these rights must now be asserted, in order to set them free from the limitations imposed by the claims of the Family. Never indeed was it either natural or reasonable that the ideal of married loyalty should be supported by sanctions of law or morality. Now, at any rate, the time has come to subordinate the rights of the Family to the rights of Free Sex : and to disentangle the life of sex from the net of social purpose. It is suggested that, before very long, both law and public opinion will be converted to give an unqualified approval to sexual freedom for both married and unmarried. If it be asked whether such sexual freedom would not destroy the institution of the Family, the advocates of the New Morality are confident that an advancing civilisation will not be without resources to meet the situation. Indeed, as we shall see, they have prepared an alternative scheme for the propagation and rearing of the species ; and they appear to regard with equanimity the reconstruction of society which must accompany their proposals. But they recognise that what they

THE NEW MORALITY

propose would cut into the structure and texture of social life more sharply and deeply than any other form of social revolution.

That there is in existence an organised campaign against the Family in the interests of the New Morality has been made plain during the last few years, though some of us have only just become aware of the fact. It is no less plain that the new campaigners find in the historical institution of the family a serious hindrance to their programme of Free Sex. They seem to consider that the hindrance of religious conviction has been already broken down: the fragments that remain can be brushed to one side. But the resistance of the family calls forth all their energies of attack. A very large book has just been published which illustrates this attitude towards the family.* One of the two Editors confesses that he abominates every kind of "institution." The book contains much "Freudian" psychology. But even Dr. Freud's criticism of the family is not advanced enough for the Editor. He considers that Dr. Freud, having suffered as a child from "father-domination," was so much impressed by this source of evil that he neglected to investigate the no less

* *The New Generation*, 1930, by an international group of writers. The book is prefaced by a photograph of Lord Russell (Mr. Bertrand Russell succeeded to the earldom in 1931), whose Introduction re-affirms the teaching already given in *Marriage and Morals*. For example he writes (p. 21), "it seems inevitable, for good or evil, that the family as a unit should more and more fade away, leaving no group to interpose its authority between the individual and the State." This is good Bolshevik doctrine. For what follows see pp. 275, 294, 283, 280 and 290 in *The New Generation*.

INTRODUCTION

troublesome vice of "mother-domination."* The modern investigator is armed with a new logic: "Our minds have been re-conditioned by the Leninistic logic of these times," and with a new psychology: "All the dynamic psychologies, so interesting and important in our time, have as their major aim the liberation of the child from the loving influence of the parents." Thus the investigator is enabled to understand the true nature of family affection: "Parents and children love one another unnaturally and hate each other naturally"; and to indicate the fruits of family affection: "I give it as my sober and most thoughtful judgment that an Insane Asylum is a place of peace and repose and sweet reasonableness compared with the institution of marriage as generally practised."†

The allusion made above to the type of social logic that is characteristic of Soviet Russia is not without point. None of us can be sure about what is going on in Russia, but the Soviet authorities are eager to press upon our notice the severity of their logic. Standing on their supreme economic axiom, they use a keen axe upon every social formation that does not conform to its authority. No institution, such as Church or Family, is allowed to claim allegiance from the

* If one were to follow this line of thought it would suggest that Dr. Freud's criticism of the family is not the only one which may be traced to unhappy experience in early days. Some indeed of the critics seem unable even to conceive the possibility of a happy home.

† This book is advertised as "a handbook for parents and a Magna Charta for children."

THE NEW MORALITY

individual in virtue of any independent moral tradition. There is only one institution which has moral authority—the State. It is quite natural therefore that in Soviet Russia the moral tradition of the family should offer but a weak resistance to the cause of sexual freedom. The social logic of the Soviet goes very well with the sexual logic of the New Morality.

This sexual logic is also severe. Here, too, we find one authoritative axiom and the elimination of every nonconformity. Unless—*per impossibile*—the Family can be conformed to the axiom of irresponsible sexual freedom, then, however natural or beautiful or valuable it may be as a social growth, the axe is to be laid to the root of the tree. In England, however, our social logic—such as it is—does not go at all well with the sexual logic of the New Morality; for our method of social development avoids the use of the axe upon the more organic and personal growths of community life. Thus, in spite of an amazing amount of quiet but none the less revolutionary social change, the English tradition of the family remains strong and vigorous, and no statesman would dream of introducing legislation to hurt it. In this country, therefore, the institution of the Family is planted right across the path of the New Morality and has to be attacked on all sides by the enemy with any weapon that comes to hand.

There are to-day, in this country as well as abroad,

INTRODUCTION

certain conditions of existence in the towns which make the way lie more open for the morality of free sex. Where there is collected a mass of individuals, loosely related to each other, living in flats and lodgings or being otherwise deprived of any settled social environment, the values of home and neighbourhood may easily fall into oblivion. Having lived at one time for three years in a Bloomsbury flat, it became clear to me how unfortunate is the state of people whose immediate environment supplies them with no natural and healthy common interests. In my own case, circumstances had filled life up to the brim with happy and stimulating work. But there are many people, and especially many young men and women, to whom fate is not so kind. Nor have they the mental energy to go further afield in search of the valuable interests which may after all be not so very far away. Too often they are apt to lose themselves amid the casual relationships and the aimless excitements of the oppidan herd. This coincidence of detachment from real social life with attachment to a loosely gregarious environment has been noted in a famous modern novel as a condition very suitable to the practice of the New Morality. The plan proposed for the young woman of the future is that she shall live in her own flat with complete sexual freedom, so that she can receive a succession of lovers in the hope of finding one whom she may wish to marry.

THE NEW MORALITY

Before looking more closely at the tenets of the New Morality let us clear our minds from the possibility of one or two misunderstandings. The high morality of sex is built on the principle of making sex-life not an end in itself, but a means to the end of family-life. That principle is essential to its construction. But its full development has been thwarted in the past by the widely prevalent idea that sex is unclean, and that at best it is permissible only because it is necessary for the procreation of the species. Only in comparatively recent years has it been possible for the deep value and power of the sexual relation to be æsthetically and scientifically realised: to the enlarging and enriching of the high morality.

There have been few great thinkers since Aristotle who have not appraised the family as the fundamental social unit and as the cell of the body corporate of social life. But during the early years of the Roman Empire there arose in the religious mind of both Christians and pagans an attitude of depreciation towards sex which denied even its social value. Though never anything like universal, this attitude won wide and powerful influence. It regarded sex as unholy and unclean. In the first stage of Christian history, although it was recognised that the few might receive an urgent call to missionary work incompatible with local and family ties, yet marriage was freely and fully affirmed as the normal good life by celebrating it as an occasion of high religious and social

INTRODUCTION

solemnity. But Christianity in its second stage came into contact with social life in the pagan city and with a civilisation beset by moral decay and by a mysterious world-weariness, the causes of which are not yet fully understood. Women had achieved a license as great as they had in the matrilineal society of ancient Egypt, and the institution of the family was being swamped in a flowing tide of sexual freedom. The sense of disgust evoked by the pariah-dog habits of the pagan city was so violent that it laid open the Christian mind to invasion by two heresies that were foreign to its original faith. There was the popular religious heresy that sex was in itself unclean. There was also the philosophical heresy which swept over the Empire like a foul wind. Blowing from the East it brought a blight upon the natural sentiment of regard for the body, and infected the mind with the conviction that its true dignity and destiny were to be sought in a passionless contemplation. There is little reason to suppose that the rank and file of Christians paid too much attention to these heresies. They just went on, even through persecution, trying to live a good life. Constantine was wise enough to discern that their pure and helpful character in family and neighbourly life was the very stuff of good citizenship. He would hardly have taken so much trouble about them if they had been, as often alleged, a tribe of morbid ascetics. But though the rank and file of Christians might be

THE NEW MORALITY

immune from Oriental heresies it was not so with many of the more highly educated. The official dogma of the Church continued to maintain the honourable and indeed the sacramental character of marriage: but a long succession of Church thinkers and teachers were caught by the infection of a superstitious asceticism; and the things they said about sex constitute one of the scandals of Church history. During the Middle Ages the official Church dealt sternly with revivals of the Manichæan heresy when they went so far as to attack the institution of marriage. But the false and unholy type of asceticism* made a deep mark on the general religious mind which has not been wholly obliterated even to-day.

It is one of the strangest ironies in the history of culture that the superstitious and the rationalistic ethics of sex are united in leading to a conclusion which means the de-moralisation and the de-valuation of sex. The one has depreciated the moral value of sex in favour of the superior claims of virginity. The other has had a like effect by denying to sex the dignity of social purpose. And neither the one nor the other type of sexual ethic would, if its conclusion were pushed home

* This, of course, must be distinguished from the heroic asceticism of the great monastic orders in the early and high Middle Ages. The part they played in laying the foundations of modern civilisation is more and more fully recognised by the historians of to-day. By their missionary and educational and charitable work, as well as by their example, they made men believe in the possibility of controlling crude impulse and of harnessing passion to high purpose.

INTRODUCTION

in practice, lead to anything less than the demoralisation and de-valuation of the institution of the Family.

Modern emancipation from the superstitious idea of the impurity of sex is a great gain to the high morality. It has rid many sincere minds of their heritage of uneasiness, and has convinced them that the physical tie between men and women has a natural rightness and beauty which should be accepted and affirmed with unhesitating joy. To such minds this discovery—for to many it is a real discovery—comes with a sense of wonderful liberation. They can now think of the physical side of marriage as blending harmoniously with all the finest values of family-life. Sex-life is now more easily and naturally interpreted as bearing a high social purpose. It has acquired a new significance just as during the nineteenth century both Nature and History acquired a new significance. But there is no reason to regard any of these scientific or æsthetic acquisitions as carrying with it any loss of ethical meaning.

If I understand the New Morality on this problem of emancipation and on the question "What ought we to do with our new freedom?" its answer is clear beyond doubt. The new must be set in sharp opposition to the old and must be cut clean away from it. The old must not be allowed to claim any value of its own or any inner power of development by which to assimilate the new. A morality of sex which is rooted in

THE NEW MORALITY

social purpose has no hope of development. It is rotten from the root.

This is a way of dealing with new freedom which is not without precedent. The passing of the Middle Ages brought emancipation from the old prejudice, whether ethical or superstitious, against the use of financial credit. Money was set free in a value and power which was no longer regarded as unclean. Some men still felt uneasy about it. Others saw that the new freedom could be assimilated by the ancient high morality of money: the morality which regarded money as a trust to be used for social purpose. Others again were for "pure freedom", leaving to Providence the task of reconciling their private profit-making with the welfare of society.

Much public attention has lately been given to the way in which the Lambeth Conference of 1930* cautiously but firmly attempted to deal with a new freedom. The Bishops were aware that the problems of marriage and family are complicated by elements which have never been present before, new elements brought forward by the scientific and æsthetic study of sex and by economic and social change. They reaffirmed the high morality which makes sex a trust for social ends. But they asserted the truth, often denied in the Middle Ages, that intercourse has a value and purpose of its own over and above its primary end of procreation: and they gave

* *Lambeth Conference Report* (S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d.).

INTRODUCTION

their judgment that, under certain conditions, it is morally right to use scientific means of birth control. The fact that in respect of this last judgment the Pope says they went much too far, and critics of another type say they did not go far enough, only emphasises the difficulty of their task. But it should, in fairness, be recognised that they made a real effort to apply the method of development to the treatment of new freedom. Above all, they have made it clear beyond mistaking, for those who care anything for their opinion, that the high morality is emancipated from the ancient superstition that sex is in itself a thing unclean.

Against any such policy of continuous development the New Morality opposes a firm veto. The vast energy of sex which, like electricity, has a lightning power of sudden destruction, but when harnessed to social needs can work miracles of light and warmth, is to be set free from social control. The idea that sex should be reserved for creative purposes within the life of the family is summarily dismissed as an irrational taboo. All discussion of sex must be governed by the axiom of its autonomy.

CHAPTER II

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

A FRIENDLY critic who has read the manuscript of this essay suggests that I ought to make more clear from the start what precisely is the position it is meant to defend. There are many nowadays, he thinks, who have only the vaguest ideas upon the marital tradition that is attacked by the New Morality. This chapter is therefore interpolated in order to state and clear the main point at issue.

The existence of mankind depended from the first on motives which lie near the mainspring of all morality. When the race appeared on the earth it was already equipped with the fundamental form of associated human life. Each human creature was born of the relation of sex and was helplessly dependent on the group of a male and a female which was constituted by that relation. Within the family, thus completed by the children, there existed, from the beginning of humanity, seeds of good which alone made society possible, the active germs of devotion to the maintenance and development of life. The relation of sex between male and female led on to a close co-operation in the service of the young, which gave new depth and quality to their original relation. Thus the

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

full meaning and value of the sexual relation between male and female was evoked by their relation to each other as parents of the child. We may note in passing that this comes near to the secret of the finest form of human friendship, in which friend loves friend the more as he realises the devotion of his friend to others. Without the quality of care for others which naturally wells up in the family, any human society would fall to pieces. From this living source, generation after generation, is renewed the vital essence of moral culture.

It has been the "virtue" of the wife and mother to achieve in a high degree the blending of sex and parenthood. Her specific biological functions, in the nurture of the young and in the care of the home, have aided her in this integration of character. The fighting, roaming male has not often attained such singleness of mind: but there is no doubt of his reverence for the ideal of womanly integrity. This reverence must fairly be allowed as the deepest moral feeling in the mind of man. It is a poor sort of libel to cross it off his account as a mere veil for sexual jealousy.

In the course of human history man has made and administered the laws: but there is something greater and deeper than law, on which all law depends. This is morality, and, in respect of morality, all the work done for the race by nature, nurture, and culture has been done, above all

THE NEW MORALITY

other means, through the home and through the integrity of character in the wife and mother who is the mainstay of the home.

The *animal* impulse of sex is among the most urgent and powerful in human nature. From the earliest ages the social guides of mankind have been aware of the difficulty of directing this impulse into ways which will serve and not confound the common ends of society. The difficulty is decreased when, as more recently, a finer culture comes to realise that sex is far more than an animal appetite to be kept in order, as though it were only estimable on account of its biological function. The idea of the beauty and value of the sexual relation leads naturally to the idea of its power to form part of a deep *personal* relation, of reciprocal dependence, trust and care, rising to the devotion of one life to another. Lastly, the sexual life is seen to be realised in all its beauty and strength when the purely personal values are refined and enlarged by the crowning element of common devotion to the child, the issue of creative love. Thus, in attaining its full end and development, the energy of sex becomes tributary to *social* life, and pours its vital energy into the stream of moral and social culture.

Anyone who takes the trouble to think about morality—and without morality there is no prospect for society save disintegration and no prospect for the race save decay—will recognise the necessity of an ideal of personality which can include a

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

generous breadth of interests together with a clear unity of self-direction: a personality which grows stronger and larger through fellowship with others and in subordination to a high aim of social development. I do not think it can be disputed that this ideal of personality is typified for the race by the figure of the wife and mother, who bends in benediction over the home. It is a figure which stands for the redemption, refinement and fulfilment of the life of sex by making it integral to the life of the family.

It is this integration of the life of sex with the life of parenthood and family which is the core of our tradition of the home. No doubt this is a mere commonplace of universal morality, but it is a commonplace which the New Morality rejects as being opposed both to nature and to reason. There is, however, a weak point, we must admit, in our tradition. The weakness is that the mass of men have always given a sincere respect to the ideal of integrity in the wife and mother, but have often been far less than whole-hearted in accepting the ideal for themselves. They have made excuses for themselves on the ground of their congenital weakness of character and of their practical incapacity to control the impulse of sex for good ends. They have claimed and have often received recognition and toleration for a double standard of sexual morality, one standard for women and another for men. Hence also a double-minded attitude towards woman,

THE NEW MORALITY

as they have seen in her now the type of all that is noblest in humanity, now the plaything of lust.

Here, if anywhere, we have an example of the injustice of male domination ; and the injustice has been invested with the glamour of romance. No nation reveres the integrity of the *materfamilias* more sincerely than the French ; has any nation, as represented by their writers, done more to justify and to glorify the sexual instability of the human male ? Often, the hero of "romance" seems to come straight from the farmyard ; only that chanticleer, valiant as he is for a fight, has the virtue of taking some care of the lives of his humble admirers. But the crude injustice of the double standard is nowadays coming home more forcibly to the minds of decent men. They see that it is a point of honour to approach more nearly to the standard of sexual integrity which they acknowledge to be, in women, the mainstay not only of the family, but of orderly and progressive social development.

This, according to the high morality, is the direction of hope for the future. Where the life of the family is guided by the marital ideal with its single standard of sexual loyalty, all other questions, such as the moral training of the young, will settle themselves. It is unthinkable that parents who have built up their common life in allegiance to the marital ideal will teach their children that sexual promiscuity is in accordance

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

with morality. Rather they will teach them trusteeship, "the august and precarious stewardship of the clean blood of the race."*

Such then is the marital ideal which is the heart of our tradition of the home. That is why, in attacking this tradition, the New Morality labours to prove from anthropology that the whole conception of female virtue was a selfish invention of the jealous and acquisitive male. That is why the New Morality seeks to make out that even the *intention* of marital fidelity in those who are going to be married is in conflict with the ideal of marriage.† That is why the New Morality finds in the liberation of women a force which will loosen the natural knot of sex and parenthood and hasten the decay of family and home. But even if the new scheme were not hopeless, because based on a false psychology of women, it would break down on account of its false psychology of men. Though men may have been weak in their own morality, double-minded and unstable in many of their ways, the last thing in the world that they desire is to see women conform to their own weakness and repudiate the ideal of womanly integrity that has been the pillar of the home.

This question has lately been tried out on a considerable scale in Soviet Russia. In Soviet circles there is no question of the old male

* Quoted from C. E. Montague by Dr. Crichton Miller in *Harrow Lectures on Education* (Cambridge, 1931). This doctrine of trusteeship is now being taught in some of our great Public Schools.

† For these two points see Chapters VI and XIV below.

THE NEW MORALITY

domination: there is no sort of moral authority to frown upon women who dissociate sexual life from the life of the family: there is equality between men and women, and for both an authorised sexual freedom. But men do not appear to respect women who exercise this freedom.

An enquiry among women teachers in Moscow, of an age between 30 and 40, shews that about one third are "polyandric". They go with many men. They are characterised as usually egoistic individualists. They are not fitted for team work, but assertive, conceited, and restlessly nervous. On the other hand the "monandric" majority are found to be usually sincere and faithful, devoted to their professional duties, guided "less by vanity than by honour." As to the opinion of Soviet men, it is clear that, even where organised public opinion justifies complete and universal sexual freedom, men use the poor polyandric as a "substitute for the prostitute" and "feel for her no high regard."* Where there exists, as the vulgar say, "free love," the woman always gets the worst of it. The "love" of her adorers rarely includes respect for her personality or care for the development of her life.

Thus, so far as this testimony goes, even in Soviet Russia, which is regarded by our moral revolutionaries as the only country in history where the life of sex has been able to shake free

* See a summary of Professor Blonsky's enquiry in Dr. Havelock Ellis's *More Essays of Love and Virtue*.

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

from "superstition and tradition", men continue their respect for the ideal of womanly integrity which was long ago woven into the foundations of modern civilisation.*

The place of the family in the history of European civilisation still needs more attention than it gets. If we had the real history of the home we should, one may believe, understand, even more plainly than we do, how strongly and quietly it has influenced the whole stream of moral culture. We shall glance at a few aspects of this history at a later stage. At the moment it may suffice to refer to one historical testimony which bears witness to the value of the family in the history of Europe and thus to the value of the marital ideal which, even allowing for many failures to realise it, has sustained the family in its work of guarding and feeding the hearth-fire of social life.

It was the family and the family alone that saved Europe in its passage from the Dark Ages to the fresh beginnings of civilisation. When the universal anarchy of the ninth and tenth centuries swept like a tornado over Western Europe, leaving everywhere destruction in its track, the work of reconstruction was achieved by the only social force which had escaped the storm. So writes the eminent French historian, M. Funck-Brentano. The family, he continues,

* Professor Blonsky concludes that "our way of love is not a thing in itself," but related in its most intimate manner to the whole of our character. This touches our point about integrity of character.

was "the only shelter for humanity which nothing could overthrow": for its foundations were laid "in the heart of mankind." Thus amid devastation and terror it preserved the "germs of social life." It was the "living cell from which France sprang."*

Few historians, I believe, would dispute the fact that, even allowing for the double-mindedness of men, the social era in which we live inherited from the previous era a fundamental moral respect for the family, for the marital ideal, and especially for the ideal of integrity in the person of the wife and mother. It had been, indeed, perhaps the principal achievement of moral culture in the early Middle Ages to implant in the wild races, from which modern Europe was to emerge, a real degree of reverence for the ideals of the life-long monogamous family. These are the ideals which, we are now told, have lost their hold on the social conscience and are being submerged by the advancing tide of "civilisation."

In order, finally, to make the character of our tradition clear beyond all chance of mistaking, I will quote a few words from the rite of marriage as it was performed in England long before the modern era. Though the ordinary rites of religion were in Latin this was an occasion where certain things had to be put in plain English. Here, for example, is a question which was addressed to the candidate for marriage:

* *The Middle Ages* (E. Tr.), p. 4 ff. (Heinemann).

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

Wylt thou have this woman to thy wyfe and love her and wirschipe her and kepe her in syknes and in helthe and in all other degrese be to her as husbande sholde be to his wyfe, and all other forsake for her, and holde thee only to her to thy lyves ende ?

Such was the question addressed to the man. That to the woman was similar with an addition about obedience to the man.

The answer to these questions, "*I will*", is an affirmation that goes to the heart of English social history. The solemn undertaking of honour, before representatives of family, neighbourhood and society as a whole: the undertaking, that is, *to forsake all other and to be true to each other for life*: was and is still the most important public act in the life of man or woman. It means that they publicly claim to be trusted for fidelity to the ideal of the monogamous family, the fundamental institution of social life: and that they affirm and accept the duty of subordinating sexual desire to the welfare of the family.

The fact that, owing either to the fault of society or to the fault of the individual, this great covenant of honour has often been violated; that it has often been undertaken unadvisedly, lightly and wantonly, without training in matters of sex, marriage and parenthood, or without reasonable care in the choice of a partner for life, does not diminish either the personal or the social value of the traditional ideal.

As I said at the beginning, this chapter has only

THE NEW MORALITY

been written in order to meet a suggestion that the commonplaces of the marital ideal ought to be made clear beyond mistaking. Perhaps it is really the fact that there are some who have been brought up with no knowledge of these things and have thus been left to the mercy of all the wild talking and writing which has followed the war like a plague. There are signs, however, of resistance to this plague even in quarters which have been suspected of an unfavourable attitude towards tradition. For example, Dr. Havelock Ellis,* an expert in the psychology of sex, writes that only the shallow and the ignorant can mistake the changes, that take place in their own little day and environment, for the obliteration of great landmarks. The family, far from being, as Strindberg regarded it, "the hell of the child and the home of all social vices," is rooted in our bi-sexual constitution. It persists "essentially, in its primitive form." Further, "the well-being of the individual in the home, his due equipment in the community, and, ultimately, his fate in the species, must rest on the sound organisation of the family. The increasing recognition of this fact on a scientific foundation is one of the most notable features of our Western civilisation."

Having stated the tradition, it remains for us to clear it from the idea that it has been made

* See *More Essays of Love and Virtue* (Constable, 1931), pp. 23, 65. Dr. Ellis acknowledges that, alongside scientific considerations, there may be "higher ethical and religious considerations".

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

obsolete by recent social and economic changes. It will be our contention that the one thing really needful is a higher development of moral and social purpose in the modern world as a whole, and particularly in the family itself. The ethical core of the old tradition of sex and family has not been disturbed, rather it has been developed, by the very great changes that we have witnessed in the last half-century. There has been a growth of the æsthetic, moral and social valuation of sex; there has been a great awakening to the need of sex-education; there has been a decisive break-away from the old suspicion that sex is in itself a thing unclean; there has been a growth in the sense of justice which now condemns the old conventional toleration of a double standard of sexual loyalty; there has come a widespread justification of a measure of birth-control within marriage, and a repudiation of the old idea of male domination and in particular of the regulation of intercourse by anything less than spontaneous reciprocal inclination.* It is our view that these and other changes, such for example as the emancipation of women and the remarkable mitigation of the old rigours of paternal authority, all without exception contribute to the hope of a development of ethical character in matters of sex and the family greater than the world has ever seen. True, this hope is confronted by many obstacles, but

* In the recent revision of the English marriage rite the word "obey," often though wrongly interpreted in a sinister sense, has now been omitted from the promises of the woman.

THE NEW MORALITY

there is none which cannot be overcome by a strong collective moral and social purpose. This purpose can only be communicated to the rising generation by an improvement in moral and social education so that those who are to take our place shall receive in good measure the light we have received from our traditions and from their developments in recent years. *That the problems of modern marriage demand above all an ethical solution* has lately been declared by one of His Majesty's judges* who has had great experience in matrimonial causes. He said :—

“ I desire to point this out—that the happiness of married life in this country does not depend upon the law ; it depends on other things. It depends upon mutual kindness, mutual courtesy, mutual forgiveness and mutual renunciation ; and above all, on mutual regard of the moral obligation that marriage imposes upon both husband and wife. If one looks into the causes of unhappy marriages—and I have spent many years in observing that type of marriage—I should say that unhappy marriages spring first of all because of the lack of the things I have just mentioned.”

So, all along the line, we shall have to make the same reply to the suggestion that modern conditions have destroyed all hope of development for the tradition of the home. It is curious to note how easily writers who have lost their faith in moral progress fall victims to the superstition that progress in mechanical science is fatal to morality. In the same way, even progress in the social

* The Hon. Mr. Justice McCardie.

sciences and services comes to be claimed as an ally in the attack on the value of life in the home.

The modern State, actuated by a parental care especially for the young, has found it necessary to provide a number of social services, which in some cases may, and actually do, invade the old sphere of family functions. This change may be taken in two ways. One way is to read the change as subversive of the independence of the family. It is true, I think, that where moral character is weak or where economic circumstances are too strong, State and voluntary aid has led to the instability and incoherence of family life. The individual becomes slack and loses both respect for himself and respect for family ties and responsibilities. Yet it is wonderful to see how the families stick together even when smitten by the curse of unemployment. The critic, however, who considers that the family is decaying fast, and sees no point in seeking to arrest the process of decay, emphasises the part which outside agencies and especially the agencies of bureaucratic machinery have come to play in family life, and sees them in the light of a logical scheme of social evolution by which the State is to take the place of the family.

But it is clear enough that no one is obliged to accept this social logic unless he fails to appreciate the moral and social value of the home. Where men and women love the home and give themselves to keeping it strong and healthy, they can and do

THE NEW MORALITY

take advantage of every kind of social service, educational, medical, recreational and so forth, in order to refresh and develop all the values of the home.

But the revolutionary critic of the home fails also in another way. He does not appreciate the truth, which is perfectly familiar to the active social worker, that, deprived of co-operation in the home, the ministrations of the State to the individual are robbed of their power to help in the development of life. Let me quote just one illustration of the view of men who are engaged in practical work for the people: the view that there is indeed danger to the family, but no way out of the danger except by the ethical development of the family and no way out of the social ineffectiveness of public services except by an improved co-operation on the part of the family. An experienced schoolmaster* has lately observed, in a cautious statement, that the school can do little apart from the home, but that co-operation between them has greatly improved since the beginning of this century. He looks, for progress, to some form of definite training in the art of parenthood and especially in its moral responsibility. Thus the educationist recognises that his own variety of social service depends, for its best work, on the higher ethical development of family life.†

* *Times Educ. Sup.* (March, 1932). For a further and most striking illustration of the same point see Note on p. 46 below.

† The point has been taken up by a body of well-known educational and medical experts who have established the *Home and School Council*

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

There is no greater value in our modern social services than that which lies in their pressure on the home to improve its own ethical quality. In one particular, however, it is true that new social conditions are seriously adverse to the home, or rather to that co-ordination of home and neighbourhood on which our social culture has been built. The loose aggregation of multitudes of individuals in the herd-conditions of some modern towns creates much difficulty for the traditional morality of family and neighbourly life. The conditions seem almost as if they had been created by some power that was anxious to encourage the tenets of the New Morality. But here also there are signs of reaction against a wild rankness of social growth. The records of building societies shew since the war a phenomenal increase in the numbers of those who seek to own their houses and to establish fixed homes.* The growing interest in town-planning includes a new appreciation of the values of neighbourhood. Sociological institutes watch new housing areas and support workers who seek to inaugurate or to co-ordinate local efforts towards common interest in organised neighbourly

(apply to the Secretary, 11, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.), the aim of which is to promote parent-teacher co-operation. "An entirely new spirit is in many places coming over the relations between home and school," a spirit which not only helps the teachers in their care of the children, but also helps the "continued education of the parents."

* Sir Enoch Hill, Chairman of the National Association of Building Societies, recently observed that we were tending to "emerge from being a nation of tenants into being a nation of house-owners." This he ascribed to a "change of vision."

THE NEW MORALITY

life. It is more and more widely recognised that herd-conditions tend to dissolve healthy social life or at least to make its development an impossible task. Few social thinkers are inclined to accept herd-life as the final and fatal term of social evolution. They continue to hold the opinion that growth in the size of the town, or growth in centralisation of control, should not and need not be allowed to crush the heart of social life. They see that the generation of social health and virtue is a work of the smaller and more organic forms of community, and that if these are allowed to decay society will collapse from within.*

Those who believe in the tradition of the home are acutely though not hopelessly conscious of the difficulties that accompany recent changes in economic and political conditions. They are conscious, too, of the inner limitations which thwarted the best development of family life even before these great outer changes came about. In certain classes, marriages were too often arranged with an eye to wealth and property and privilege.† Until quite lately there were barbarous ideas of a man's property even in his wife.‡ But in all classes, the last century has abolished much which, even in the laws of this country, a hundred years ago, was

* On all this see Chapter XI.

† See the great protest in Latimer's Sermon to Edward VI.

‡ *The Times* during April, 1932, published a series of letters giving evidence of cases within the last century where a man put a rope round his wife's neck and offered her for sale in a public place.

almost incredibly barbarous. In the middle classes of society there may still remain a good deal of the former family selfishness, stagnation, exclusive and narrow outlook. *Res angusta domi* might well serve as the motto, not of narrow economic means, but of narrow cultural interests. Against the sham idealisms, sham loyalties and sham conventions of the nineteenth century family, the critics, such as Mr. Bernard Shaw, have justly protested. But such criticism is welcomed, as all to the good, by those who really care for the development of family life, for its healthy and fruitful action and reaction with the whole process of social culture, and for its inspiration by high aims of service to the race. The improvement of education, and in particular of women's education, is obviously introducing a spirit of finer interest and vitality into the great mass of healthy and happy family life which is the foundation of our national welfare.* Education, too, is lowering the threshold of middle-class culture so that it now includes a large proportion of the artisan life of the country. Here, also, we find much *refreshment* of family life. Many of our best artisans are grievously concerned for the economic and moral condition of their less fortunate comrades. Among them you may hear fierce criticism of our social system as a whole, but rarely, I think, of the institution of the family.†

* As to middle-class family life, see the remarks of Sir William Beveridge, quoted on p. 45 below.

† For the artisan's view on family life, his readiness to take hope for it and to make sacrifices for it, see the evidence given on p. 47 below.

THE NEW MORALITY

In our tradition of the family there is much that is open to just criticism. But its supporters are confident that the tradition is the basis of a great and ever-developing ideal. What is the inmost nerve of their confidence? I think it is living experience. They have experienced the altogether inestimable value of a good home. Probably they gained this illuminating experience in the home where they were born. Perhaps they have taken part in the creation of a home of their own. Certainly they have either in their own families or in the families of intimate friends learnt at close hand to appreciate the value of the home; and have been led, in the course of their total experience of life, to associate this value with their best hopes for the future of the nation and the race. From the vantage-ground of this conviction of value they may survey the findings of various sciences which bear upon the home. They are naturally inclined to seek in the new knowledge of our times some encouragement for the hope they entertain for the family. But the hope and the conviction of value which have come to them through the medium of experience of life as a whole are not easily shaken even when these findings seem, for the time, unfavourable. Others, on the contrary, strain every point that can be drawn from the yield of such sciences as anthropology and psychology in order to prove that the family is by no means essential to human welfare.

We shall have to study an example of this latter

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

proceeding. If we are honest with ourselves we must confess that our valuation of the family does not spring originally from a scientific source. At the same time, we desire to look closely at any claim that science has disproved the existence of a potentiality in human nature for gradually realising more and more of the great ideal of the home.

This ideal has been handed down to us by tradition. From the very earliest times culture as well as Nature has been at work in its construction ; a culture which includes moral demands for the control and guidance of impulse and instinct.* All moral or æsthetic or scientific culture implies an ideal which makes serious demands upon the higher powers of man. It puts a severe strain upon these powers in giving them the task of subordinating impulse to purpose. This culture is the spiritual element in man. With rare exceptions he has held that this spiritual element of his may be, and, indeed, is, in communion with a spiritual world all round him. With that higher faith we are not directly concerned in this essay, save in the form that goodness of life has hitherto been inspired by it, very notably in the case of the savage. To-day, we construe it in terms of living purpose, a purpose which is not without witness either in nature or history. In obedience to this faith, in ideal or in purpose, mankind has worked out the form of family life, perhaps the finest construction of all

* See Dawson on p. 76 below. It is a point of Dr. Freud that the transition from "primitive" to "civilised" life always brings repression of instinctive urges.

THE NEW MORALITY

human culture. In some European ages the family has been the sole refuge of moral and social culture, a little lighthouse in a raging sea of brutality.* It has survived by a process of natural, or rather of historical and cultural, selection. Its ideals, as perceived by men, have never been more than imperfectly realised. But they have developed in themselves and they have won great conquests over mere impulse. What more there is in the ideals that may yet be seen ; what modifications there are in the structure and activity of the family that may yet be necessary ; what may be the gifts of general culture and civilisation to the family and how the family may learn to repay these gifts with interest, no one need pretend to define with precision. But there are signs of hope all round us, to confirm our faith that the future has much in store for the development of the family and for its service to the welfare of the race.

It will be our task to consider an account of sex and the family which is governed by a judgment of the eminent value of sexual freedom. The story is divided into four periods. First, the pre-human stage for which we have to go to biology. Secondly, the pre-civilised stage of human history, on which light is sought from anthropology. Thirdly, the era of civilisation, which is the sphere of history proper. Lastly, the coming age.

But before our examination of this story it will

* See p. 31 above. This refers, of course, to ordinary human life, and not to special forms of common life such as the monasteries.

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

be well for us to take a general view of the substance of the New Morality.

NOTE ON HOME AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

After many years' experience of work among students (in several Universities), among lawyers and doctors, and among commercial and industrial workers, I believe the literary critics of the family are wrong when they say it is decaying fast. This conviction is confirmed by evidence from social workers and investigators, of which two examples may be quoted.

According to the New Morality the family may survive among the rich. What about the middle classes and the wage-earners?

Sir William Beveridge gives in *The Listener*, April 13, 1932, his first impressions of the results of an enquiry which bears upon the family. Elaborate forms were carefully filled up and sent in, representing 18,000 families. The people, who voluntarily applied for these forms and sent them in, were mostly from the "middle economic grades," on the whole "obviously normal people with happy family lives." In respect of the relations of husband and wife, parents and children and family life generally, the replies were a great surprise to Sir William Beveridge, being quite unlike the pictures of life given by certain novelists and essayists. They were given by "ordinary people talking about the family life they know, not for effect," because their names will never be known, but just "because they find family life interesting as well as happy." The first impression given by these replies is "that there have not been any very great changes in family life in the last generation, but what changes there are, are on the whole an improvement." As one witness says: "A lot of sham family loyalty has been lost, but I do not find any lack of readiness to co-operate in a happy family life." The change in the formal position of the wife (the new freedom) and "the resultant better companionship of husband and wife, come out again and again

THE NEW MORALITY

in every class." As an acetylene welder testifies: "No man, young or old, need hesitate at saying a woman is his friend and pal." Sir William Beveridge concludes that these replies "give one what, so far as I know, no one has had in this country before—a picture of happy families—of the families which have problems and struggles, but do not get into the divorce courts" or otherwise come into unfavourable public notice.

But, it may be said, the really disastrous impact of "science and civilisation" on the family is to be seen in the wage-earning classes. Among the workers in our great cities is there any hope that the family is more than an obsolete convention? Well, no one can deny that urbanisation has tended to damage family life, but only those who, for whatever reason, *do not want* the family to survive could dream of giving up the struggle against the tendency to herd-life and herd-morality in our over-urbanised communities. Let us glance at an example of those who do not give up.

The Case for Action (by Innes H. Pearse, M.D., B.S., and G. Scott Williamson, M.C., M.D.; Faber & Faber), gives a fine illustration of the constructive temper of the social worker and of his attitude to the institution of the family. The Master of Balliol writes of the authors' "almost uncanny power of getting hold of all the positive fruitful elements in family and social life and making them work together."

The book starts from the problem of health, a problem the acuteness of which may be seen in the fact that a million children in this country are unfit to take advantage of the education supplied by the State. What the President of the Royal College of Surgeons calls "a new attack" on this problem was begun when the Pioneer Health Centre was opened in Peckham, April, 1926. The root idea was a Family Club, each family paying a small weekly sum, and every member of the family receiving a periodical medical overhaul. The services offered were *advisory* and not charitable, being directed to the care of health. The work has now expanded into a creative development of healthy life in home and neighbourhood, which is profoundly interesting and hopeful.

The medical and social workers at the Centre have been convinced by experience that the home must be "jealously preserved" as the *only* soil in which the young child can grow naturally. The central figure of the home is the

THE TRADITION OF THE HOME

mother, whose body instinctively selects and transforms the food of the embryo and whose "intuition" is operative in the home. In history, "woman seems to have been responsible for the establishment of the homestead," and for the selection of its food. In the last thirty years mechanism and urbanism have interfered with the work of her intuition : but with the help of science it may do its work as well as ever. Better, indeed, for modern life provides an enormous variety of opportunities for "enriching the home."

Evidently the authors believe that men as well as women could and should be brought into the sphere of active and lively interest in the reintegration of the home. "The artisan wants children and wants opportunities for their development." Circumstances have lately been unfavourable to his hopes, but they can be changed. There are clear signs of a new spirit in these matters. "The human organism, man + woman, is becoming conscious of its power to fashion the future through the child. But, along with this development of the parental urge, there is arising a further development in the human consciousness. This is the *urge to responsibility*." (p. 68.)

This sense of responsibility is quickened by the new attention to birth-control. No one yet knows the right method of birth-control or what "physical, mental and spiritual effects" are produced by it, or even whether harm is done to the child which is conceived in spite of contraceptives. (pp. 75-8.) To broadcast "knowledge" in these matters is wrong. If any advice has to be given at the Centre it is given "for the sake of the family and health."

The story of this adventurous attack on a great problem of physical and social health cannot be told here. But a few quotations from the book may be given to shew the temper of moral and social purpose by which this experiment, so fruitful of experience, seeks to control the forces of science and civilisation and to use them for the development of life.

"The artisan is prepared to spend his spare money in taking responsibility for the maintenance of his own health and that of his family. He is eager for responsibility, but does not find a satisfactory field in which to exercise it." (p. 127.)

". . . the spare money is (now) going to the cinema, the public dance-hall, the billiard saloon, the betting tout and the public-house. The pity of it is that within our experience

THE NEW MORALITY

the artisan does not even care for these things. *They are all that can be bought.* The spare money that now weekly goes to these things is available for the development of the health of the family." (p. 131.)

"Where, however, health, taken in its broadest sense, is the consideration, we do not consider that the requirements are fulfilled by any agency that takes the child more and more from the home, and *does not simultaneously take steps to heighten the responsibility of the parents and widen the activities of the home.* . . . We have discovered from experience that young parents want to take responsibility in every direction for their children. They do not know how to do so." (pp. 107, 108.)

"Where the parents are solicitous for their children's welfare and prepared to make sacrifices (not necessarily where they are well-to-do), the children are apparently in a position to take maximum advantage of the education they receive; where the reverse is the case, they profit nothing from the money and trouble expended upon them." (pp. 115-6.)

This is a book to be read by men and women who have hope for their kind. They will see that it points the way to the reconstruction, even in the midst of many factors which favour herd-morality, of both family and social environment, of both home and neighbourhood.

This year (1932) there will be held at Frankfort-on-Main the Second International Conference on Social Work. The general subject is the Family. In a Bulletin prepared for this Conference, Mlle J. Delagrangé, Director of the Central Bureau of Nurses of the French Ministry of Public Health, writes as follows:—"For these workers the family is sacred, for they recognise, better than anyone else could possibly do, that everything which disturbs its economic, spiritual and moral unity is harmful to its own life and consequently harmful to society as a whole. The experience acquired in different countries reveals that no institution, however ideally conceived, can ever hope to replace for the child the physical, moral and spiritual strength which only the family can provide and without which his ascent to manhood is fraught with untold privation, pain and suffering."

CHAPTER III

THE NEW MORALITY

THE actual tenets and scientific background of the New Morality may be studied in a convenient summary* written by a distinguished exponent of mathematics and logic. I do not propose to reply to his attack on Christian Ethics, because I am not familiar enough with the type of Christianity which the author seems to have in mind. But I shall try to reply to his attack on the Family. On his second page of text we read that Soviet Russia is the only country in all history where sexual ethics and sexual institutions have been determined by rational considerations. This is not meant to imply that they are perfect, but that they are free from "superstition and tradition."¹ The Introduction ends with a programme. The book is to eliminate the elements of superstition and then consider those "entirely new factors which make the wisdom of past ages the folly instead of the wisdom of the present." The

* *Marriage and Morals*, by Mr. Bertrand Russell, whose wish is, we understand, to be named, in respect of his writings, without his title as a peer. On the wrapper is a quotation from Dr. Inge, the Dean of St. Paul's, who describes the book as a "derisive and provocative attack on all that is meant by Christian morality." References to this book will be marked by numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.) in the text and collected at the end of each Chapter.

THE NEW MORALITY

promise is held out that the book will end on a note of hope.

If we may accept, as I think we may, the author's view that extra-marital relations vary according to the prevalent type of marriage,² it will be well to fix our attention chiefly on the institution of the family. The essential point of the New Morality is that married men and women shall have absolute sexual freedom. This being arranged, it follows, as the night the day, and indeed by an *a fortiori*, that those who are not bound even by the loose tie of such a marriage shall have no less absolute a freedom. Here we have the core of the New Morality, a new article in the covenant of marriage reserving the freedom of adultery.

Where there are children, the parents should realise "the superiority of their claims to their own romantic emotions."³ But "temporary fancies should be put up with"⁴ and there need be no "melodramatic orgies of jealousy." Great emphasis is laid upon the sin of jealousy. The point of loyalty in marriage is shifted. The old loyalty was to keep free from adultery. The new loyalty is to keep free from jealousy.

At the end of the book⁵ the author distinguishes his doctrine of freedom from a doctrine of license. Self-control will be as necessary as ever, but it "will be applied more to abstaining from interference with others than to restraining one's own freedom." Sex must be free. "Love is

THE NEW MORALITY

an anarchic force which, if it is left free, will not remain within any bounds set by law or custom."⁶ "The purely instinctive man, if he could have his way, would have all women love him, and him only." He is jealous, and if they love anyone else they "inspire him with emotions which may easily pass into moral condemnation."⁷

It is a favourite tenet of the New Morality that "instinct should be trained rather than thwarted."⁸ Jealousy indeed is instinctive and goes with the "pure instinct" of universal desire. But in a social system the "pure instinct" cannot expect to have all its own way. The instinct of jealousy must therefore be thwarted and repressed. Moral struggle is needed here, if nowhere else.

This one moral struggle and repression of instinct, we read, is required for the "mellowing of marriage."⁹ But, as we shall see, the New Morality expects the break-up rather than the mellowing of marriage and the family. This, however, will not be a matter for rejoicing.¹⁰ For the beauty and strength of the family ideal are not denied—if only these can be conformed to the axiom of free sex.

Marriage may still be happy under certain conditions and then it is "the best and most important relation that can exist between two human beings."¹¹ Further, "where a marriage is fruitful and both parties to it are reasonable and decent, the expectation ought to be that it will be lifelong."¹² "It

is of course a very good thing when a husband and wife love each other so completely that neither is ever tempted to unfaithfulness."¹³ "Where there are children the stability of marriage is to my mind a matter of considerable importance."¹⁴

Appreciation is also shewn of the possibilities of affection between parents and children and of the importance of parental duty. The ideal of life-long faithful monogamy and of the kind of family-life which belongs to it receives a recognition second only to that which is given to the ideal of free sex. But the prospect for the family is represented as gloomy in the extreme. Already it is decaying fast¹⁵ and the advance of civilisation, already hostile to the family, gains rapidly upon it and threatens to tread it down. Further, the inner force of civilisation undermines the family, as we shall see, by economic and political changes. Moreover, it has already changed the natural instincts by which the traditional family was supported.

The connubial and parental ideals are left hanging in the air. First, as to marriage: "the more civilised people become, the less capable they seem of life-long happiness with one partner,"¹⁶ and "among civilised people in the modern world . . . not many marriages after the first few years are happy."¹⁷ In many modern marriages "mutual faithfulness is not demanded."¹⁸ Human nature is changing under

the influence of civilisation. Originally it was not thus. Animal marriages are "as a rule monogamic." There is evidence of the same condition among some of the "lowest races of savages." Even in civilised mankind "faint traces of a monogamic instinct can sometimes be perceived."¹⁹ But civilisation has had a remarkable effect. "Uninhibited civilised people, whether men or women, are generally polygamous in their instincts."²⁰

Secondly, as to parenthood: "paternal feeling is not nearly so strong in highly civilised communities as it is elsewhere,"²¹ and "Civilisation . . . tends greatly to diminish women's maternal feelings."²² Indeed there is "on the part of the individual woman often a horror of the home."²³

Perhaps we should note in passing that though among the anthropoid apes and among primitive men there is evidence of "monogamic instinct," yet this supplies no solution to the problem of human instinct. The "pure instinct" of man is the desire for the love of "all women." Sex-appetite, which seems to be modest in proportion among the animals, now swells among men to monstrous proportions. Whether this be the work of Nature, now at last released from repressions and taboos, or the work of an inflammatory Civilisation, the result is just the same. Human nature, as now constituted, is unfit to meet the demands of life in the monogamous family.

THE NEW MORALITY

The spirit, or we might say the demon, of Civilisation is pictured as dissolving the structure of the family by economic corrosion, and as changing or destroying the instincts upon which its vitality depends. But Civilisation and Science, working together, are credited with a still more intimate and penetrating destructiveness. They have cut the nerve of sexual loyalty and have deprived it of power over the thinking mind. The old demand for sexual loyalty rose, we are told, from the man's desire of power over the woman and her offspring, and was reinforced by a superstitious taboo imposed both on men and on women. These two elements were joined together to form what was called a morality. But sex union contains in itself no claim on loyalty. Nor is there any question of duty or honour involved. The old morality of married loyalty was without foundations. Its real substance was composed of the proprietary idea and the superstitious idea. Both these ideas are now exploded by the advance of science and civilisation. Science has added a special factor of great importance. Hitherto "adulterous intercourse" might lead to children: thus involving an "almost intolerable instinctive strain:"²⁴ but "contraceptives have altered the whole aspect of sex and marriage,"²⁵ and, though admittedly not yet secure in their operation, have made everything easier for the New Morality.

In consequence of these changes the old

THE NEW MORALITY

morality is "as dead as the Dodo."²⁶ A comparison of the sexual debauchery among the younger generation in America with the "similar state of affairs" in England gives some advantage to England.²⁷ America, we read, must learn to recognise the higher values involved in sex.²⁸ At present the young people over there are in a condition of sexual promiscuity.²⁹ But England has advanced a good way in the same direction. Once superstition is gone and contraceptives have come, no principle of discipline remains. For example, young women are now free from the two fears of "hell-fire and pregnancy." Apparently they are not even conscious of the existence of any morality of sex. The sacredness of its creative power, its fiduciary character as a trust to be honoured* for the end of the family, the thought of keeping heart and body for the man who is to be their husband, the father of their children, and the life-long partner of their home—all these are unrealised, or if realised are apt to be blown away by the first gust of desire or drowned in the "rising tide of immorality."³⁰ The modern girl, set free from the fear of punishment here and hereafter, has made it plain that she has no taste for "virtue" and pays no attention to the old idea of honour. There is nothing in her mind or nature to correspond with it. Those who wish her conduct to conform to it dare not trust her

* Gone is the grace of Perdita and Miranda, the children of Shakespeare's ripe wisdom, whose "honour" he loved.

THE NEW MORALITY

with her freedom. Without force there is no remedy. First, she must be so educated as to make her "stupid, superstitious and ignorant." Secondly, she must not be allowed to read anything about sex. Thirdly, she must never be left alone with a man. Fourthly, she must not go out to work; and so on and so on for a page and more. It is perhaps the most remarkable page in a remarkable book, and it is interesting as an exposition of the author's opinion of the future mothers of our people.

All these suggestions of the bankruptcy of the old family-morality, coming on top of so many other suggestions that the family and all its instincts are already decaying fast, serve to prepare the mind for the author's view of the future of sex and society in civilised communities. The dogmatic tones of prophecy are not used. Every forecast is qualified by adverbs such as "probably" or "very likely." But the cascade of probabilities falls precisely in the same direction: and their total volume is as menacing as any of the old prophecies of woe. The fall in the birth-rate may easily go on until the "virtual extinction of the most civilised races." The destruction of the bi-parental family in civilised communities may lead to the dying-out of procreation, "leaving the human race to be replenished by stocks that have preserved the older convention."⁸¹ In Russia, where the "Government is on the side of the new morality," the "theories of the Communists are

THE NEW MORALITY

likely to affect only a comparatively small urban section,"³² for the family is strongly established among the peasants who are eighty per cent. of the population. The peasants, therefore, will survive the Communists. The tendency of civilisation is to dissolve not only the institution of the family, but the whole tribe of the civilised. The only escape from this fate will be for the State to organise the business of procreation, to make child-bearing a salaried public service, and to rear the children in public nurseries. The old functions of the family will be taken over by the State, and the people, relieved from the duties and restrictions of family-life, will enjoy complete and universal sexual freedom.

.

Such is our summary of the New Morality. How far can this system claim the support of modern science and civilisation? In order to find the answer to this question we must follow a new story of sex and the family. This will lead us from the earliest beginnings of society to a dark Utopia which, fortunately for us, is not yet in sight. Let us begin with Biology.

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| ¹ p. 10. | ¹² p. 114. | ²³ p. 169. |
| ² p. 12. | ¹³ p. 246. | ²⁴ p. 183. |
| ³ p. 186. | ¹⁴ p. 114. | ²⁵ p. 133. |
| ⁴ p. 182. | ¹⁵ p. 173. | ²⁶ p. 75. |
| ⁵ p. 249. | ¹⁶ p. 109. | ²⁷ p. 129f. |
| ⁶ p. 103. | ¹⁷ p. 110. | ²⁸ p. 232. |
| ⁷ p. 36. | ¹⁸ p. 113. | ²⁹ p. 130. |
| ⁸ p. 242. | ¹⁹ pp. 105-6. | ³⁰ pp. 74-5. |
| ⁹ p. 114. | ²⁰ pp. 111-12. | ³¹ pp. 160-61. |
| ¹⁰ p. 240. | ²¹ p. 158. | ³² pp. 70, 166. |
| ¹¹ p. 115. | ²² p. 170. | |

CHAPTER IV

BIOLOGY

THE New Morality is based on the axiom that sexual freedom is right and just. This axiom is correlated with a psychology of instinct. Here we find that "uninhibited civilised people, both men and women, are generally polygamous in their instincts": and, going deeper, that the "purely instinctive man would have all women love him"—the addition "and him only" shewing that jealousy is part of the instinct, a part which is to be sternly repressed.

It is obvious that this doctrine of instinct gets little support from Biology. If we are to find any significance for human life in the theory of biological evolution, it cannot be denied that the voice of Nature is clear for the monogamous family and not for sexual freedom. The witness of Biology, therefore, is dismissed by the New Morality with a touch of irony: "Among the anthropoid apes, although they do not have the assistance of religion, sin (*sc.* adultery) is unknown, since instinct (*sc.* the monogamic) suffices to produce virtue."¹ Accordingly the hope of finding traces of a "natural" justification for the axiom of sexual freedom is centred, not on Biology, but on Anthropology.

BIOLOGY

But few students of Biology can be content to see the witness of their science ruled out of court by so summary and indeed so derisory a dismissal. An important new book* by one of the most eminent living biologists, shows clear signs of this discontent. The title of the book, *The Biological Basis of Human Nature*, asserts the claim of Biology to be considered in any discussion of human nature. Moreover, Professor Jennings, the author, is not satisfied with the treatment which biological fact receives from "young biological physicists with the confidence of youth and mechanism combined," or with the "investigators who in their own fields of work stick closely and loyally to the experimental facts," but "feel licensed to ignore and override those facts in other fields." Nor is he any better satisfied with the way in which certain sociologists override the witness of Biology when treating of the problem of marriage.†

Professor Jennings deals with this problem

* *The Biological Basis of Human Nature* (1930), by H. S. Jennings, Professor of Zoology in the John Hopkins University, U.S.A. In the *Cambridge Review* (October 17th, 1930), Dr. Joseph Needham regards the book as remarkably successful in its achievement and speaks of its value to anyone who is concerned to form opinions on the government of human society.

† So too, Dr. Adler, the Viennese psychologist, protests against "frightful exaggerations", amounting to "insanity", on the subject of sex-education, which, like all other education, depends on the "sense of co-operation" within the family (see *Times Lit. Sup.*, March 19th, 1931). Dr. Malinowski, the anthropologist, protests against the exploitation of his science, and especially of its "past mistakes" by a group of "publicists" for the purpose of their own propaganda on the family (see *The Listener*, February 11th, 1931). The distinction between scientists and publicists is one which needs to be borne in mind by the general reader.

as a man of science and not as a moral philosopher. Here, for example, is the way in which he handles the system of Temporary Families which is advocated by certain publicists in America. "Individuals are to become mated for a longer or shorter period, separating as they please." It is a system, he writes, which ignores the long period of dependence of the children on the parents : wrenches the framework of society by the frequent separation or change of mates : injures the children, distracts and distresses the parents. "If defended, it must be by the extreme selectionist who holds that severe and unfavourable living conditions, with a high death-rate, are in the long run advantageous to the species. If combined with the prevention of the production of offspring, as often proposed, and as seems indispensable if it is not to give rise to immediate distress and dislocation, it must result in the extinction of the species ; or else it must prevail in only part of the population, another part living under some system adequate to the care of the offspring."*

At the close of his chapter on "The Biological Basis of Marriage and the Family," Jennings offers the following cautious judgment :—"The varied difficulties offered by the present nature of man : the fact that he is a mammal, his long and helpless infancy, the high development of his mating and parental impulses, and his diversified and exacting life career, appear to be met more

* Jennings, p. 265.

BIOLOGY

adequately (though obviously still imperfectly) by the lifelong monogamous family than by any other system."

Professor Jennings writes, as I have said, from a biological and not from an ethical point of view. His testimony must be taken for what it is and not for what it is not. But he has no doubt there are deep-lying forces and needs, common to animal and human nature, which are still in operation. He would hardly agree with the view that civilisation has revolutionised human nature by turning an "instinct" for monogamy into an "instinct" for polygamy though he would understand the type of propaganda which requires such a revolution. On the other hand he would certainly agree that the voice of Nature as heard in the story of biological evolution has a real significance for human life.

It is my aim in writing this essay to make clear to myself and perhaps to some others what are the two great alternatives which lie before us when we think on the subject of sex; the one presupposing the right of the family to control the order of sexual life, the other presupposing the right of sexual freedom to overthrow the nature of the family. Leaving aside the teaching of Christian Ethics we may usefully consider the subject from the point of view of general social philosophy; and in doing so we who are but general readers in biology may well be thankful to a great biologist who, in offering his testimony,

makes an "effort to present it in non-technical language."

In his chapter on "Marriage and the Family" Professor Jennings indicates the two sets of fundamental activities which belong to the organism. Each individual has his own life-career: each produces new individuals. These two sets of activities are to a certain extent in opposition, sometimes in extreme opposition. All organisms find that the business of reproduction interferes with their individual life-careers. Even in the single-parent system much sacrifice is demanded. But at the bi-parental stage the problems and difficulties are multiplied a thousandfold: "perhaps also the interests and satisfactions." The mating, possessing, protecting and providing impulses play a tremendous rôle in the process of structural and mental evolution, more particularly in the case of the female. "The special problems of feminism begin far back in the animal series." But the male life-career is also deeply modified. Even in "various fish, the male helps build and guard the nest." The economic dependence of the female has begun. Thus arises the stage of co-operation between the mates, the mating relation is continued, and there comes into existence the "family." Permanent monogamous marriage has arisen independently among the mammals and the birds. It is life-long, though the care of the offspring is not. It is "emphatically not true to say, as is so often said with assumed finality",

BIOLOGY

that the only function of marriage is the production of children. To break the mating relation is to bring all into confusion. "Such is the situation we find in the higher anthropoids, in the orang and gorilla; such is the situation found at its highest development in man."

Thus "the monogamous family, with its life-long union of mates, appears as the final term of a long evolutionary series." But this is not the only "main line of evolution." There is another which leads to the polygamous family. Here, in the herd or flock, the male protects the females and their young, and fights off the other males. Apart from protecting them, the male has little direct concern with the care of the young. His business is mainly fighting and propagating. It is a system which results in perpetual war amongst the males, selective elimination in favour of the warlike, cutting out of the pacifists and keeping society at war.

Lastly, there is a third line of evolution in which society as a whole takes over many of the functions of the family. It is seen to some extent in the polygamous herd and even in man, as a supplement to the family (e.g. the school). But this line of evolution cannot readily reach its extreme development where, as in the mammals, there is a long and intimate connection between parents and young: it can only do so in organisms that do not have this connection. "It is in certain of the insects that we find the culmination of this

system. In these social insects the two parents play little part in life save in the production and bringing together of the germ cells." Further, as in some of the ants and bees, one female is selected as the mother. She is fertilised by one of the males, the rest being either destroyed, or transformed like the females into neutral individuals. The young are looked after by some of these neutrals. The family does not exist : it is a stage in evolution that has been transcended in favour of a stage that in social organisation is much beyond that of man.

As for mankind, "the monogamous family appears at present the system of greatest stability, though itself with irregularities and unstable points." But in the course of human history there have been examples of all the varieties displayed in the course of animal evolution. So "there occur scattered individuals who revert to the type of mere fertilisers leaving the rest of the work of the family to the female." It is an "otiose and incompetent condition." Such males are "sporadic throw-backs."

So, too, there has been human polygamy, a system sometimes defended for its eugenic value on the ground that it is the more warlike males who propagate the species. To-day there is the proposal for the Temporary Family. In other quarters we meet "popular modern proposals" to do away with the family as among the insects. The real inspiration of these proposals appears

to be the "desire to set free and give full satisfaction to the mating impulse," and to facilitate change in mates whenever fancy dictates. "Possibly," writes the Professor, "the enthusiasm for this system will abate" when it is realised that "the system has resulted (in the insects) not in the freeing of the mating impulses but in their suppression" and in the "essential desexualisation of society."

Let us briefly review the scheme of the New Morality in the light of the foregoing. It will be seen not to be entirely beyond reach of these biological considerations. The scheme, we should remember, is governed from beginning to end by the axiom that the exercise of sex should be free from either moral or social responsibility. For example, even between people who are married there is to be no tie of mutual loyalty. "Husbands and wives must learn to understand that . . . in their private (*sc.* sexual) lives they must be free."² That faithful monogamy is the "last term in a long evolutionary series" has no bearing on the question. The biological fact may be dismissed with a touch of irony.

The biological analogy which comes nearest to the scheme of the New Morality is the polygamous herd. At any rate the polygamous male has a wide sexual freedom, so long as he is prepared to fight for it. He has nothing to do save to fight and propagate. It is the morality of the Three Musketeers, with the difference that those romantic worthies managed to evade even the

THE NEW MORALITY

scanty biological responsibilities of the polygamous male. But at least they were true to type in being ready to fight. In European history, this kind of herd-morality has usually been accompanied by the practice of the duel, especially in the social environs of Royal Courts. In these softer days the polygamous individual would probably gain his ends by the use of money rather than by bodily skill or strength. The New Morality suggests a d'Artagnan who has lost his sword.

But the biological analogy of the polygamous herd breaks down in another particular. The New Morality assumes a polygamous instinct not only in the male, but also in the female. The activity of this instinct in modern women is ascribed to the "decay of inhibitions" and to the "liberation of women." The pioneers of women's rights desired to "impose on men the moral fetters which hitherto had only been endured by women." That is, they rebelled—and justly—against the double standard. But the great war has changed all that. "Modern feminists" ask that what is permitted to men shall be permitted to women also. "Their predecessors sought equality in moral slavery whereas they seek equality in moral freedom." The issue of this movement for "moral freedom" may be doubtful in England. But there is no doubt about its success in Russia, for there "the Government is on the side of the new morality."³

Still another point of the New Morality is

without its analogue in the system of the polygamous herd. For, the female of the animal herd is engaged in child-bearing. The polygamous male is free from the care of the young, but the female has no such freedom. The New Morality, however, offers to females as well as to males a complete sexual freedom. Science, with its contraceptives, has made the New Morality safe for women. By a remarkable coincidence it has come in the nick of time to meet the emancipation of women and the consequent liberation of their polygamous instinct. Child-bearing and child-rearing need not be allowed to stand in the way of freedom. Indeed, though civilisation reduces parental feeling among men, the desire for children is less common among women than among men.⁴ They will therefore be ready for a complete dissociation of sex-life from maternity. "Maternal emotions" have been "slobbered over" by men who saw in them "subconsciously" the means to their own domination.⁵

How then is the race to be propagated in a "civilised" world? The answer to this question brings us to the point of transition from the sociology of the herd to the sociology of insects. Society will take over the functions of maternity.* The functions of procreation and child-bearing cannot actually be performed by the State, but they can be controlled by the State. Procreation cannot indeed be limited to a "queen" and her

* On all this see Chapter XVII below.

THE NEW MORALITY

mate, as amongst the insects. But an approximation can be made to that system. Procreation can be limited to a very small minority of men, eugenically chosen by the State. Child-bearing can be entrusted to a larger minority of women who will be paid for their services. Child-rearing presents no difficulties. The children can be taken away from their mothers at once and be put in public institutions. Thus the family function of propagating the race can be provided by a loan from the sociology of insects. The diffused instinct of the hive will replace the love of home and children. Women as well as men will—with occasional brief limitations, all paid for—have complete and universal sexual freedom. Sex and parenthood will be finally divorced from each other. The instinct of parenthood will die out. The family will be a thing of the past.

It is a conclusion which flows with clear logic from the argument of the New Morality as it moves forward from its starting-point in the axiom of free sex. What would be the result of this freedom? It is only in quite modern times we are told that “women have regained the degree of freedom which they enjoyed in the Roman Empire.”⁶ Since then the axiom of sexual freedom has not been allowed to do its work. But, as we have seen, that false dawn of freedom in the Roman Empire led to a reaction of extreme asceticism which virtually aimed at the desexualisation of social life. It now appears that sexual freedom

BIOLOGY

itself, when logically worked out, might lead to the same result! At any rate, it is the condition of life among the insects where the State replaces the Family. However, the logic of the New Morality is very hard to apply to human life. As Professor Jennings remarks, it would mean crossing over from the mammalian to the insect line of evolution. But this, he says, is a task which should have been started "æons ago." It is too late in the day to go to the ant.

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

¹ p. 105.

² pp. 68-70.

³ p. 170.

² p. 115.

⁴ p. 159.

⁵ p. 52.

CHAPTER V

ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTHROPOLOGY is the study of man, or, in the narrower and more customary usage, the study of the ways of mankind before the rise of civilisation. It is a branch of science, though not a science in the exact or metrical sense of the word. Belonging rather to the historical type of science, it may have much to tell us about the earlier stages of human history and of the way in which human nature has worked out for itself certain types of behaviour. On the basis of this and other information, the philosophical historian seeks to interpret the facts of human behaviour in terms of some continuous meaning or purpose. He will try to find a direction or law or ideal in human nature and history. He is all the better satisfied if he can discern a continuity of development which links the facts of biology with those of anthropology, and so right on to modern history.

Those of us who are not students of this or of any other branch of science, but have spent our lives mainly in practical work, are liable to be taken aback when it is asserted that science in general or anthropology in particular has now reduced to vanity the ideals by which we have thought to guide the activities of our life and

ANTHROPOLOGY

work. But a little reading on the subject is enough to shew that these assertions have slight scientific authority.

The first sweeping use of Anthropology for the purpose of discrediting the institution of the family was made in the last century when it was asserted that science had discovered sexual promiscuity to be the custom of primitive society. To-day there are few scientific men who would allow that assertion, and in any case, only with very strict qualifications. Dr. E. S. Hartland,* for example, considers that the earliest form of social organisation consisted in the "power and control of the man as provider and ruler of dependent wife and children." Family groups, though wandering about in search of nutrition, are always within reach of their fellows. Among them there is probably "something like sexual promiscuity, relieved perhaps by temporary unions in the nature of monogamy." "Absolute promiscuity we find nowhere in human society." But "sexual morality is a very different thing in savagery or barbarism from what it is in a high state of civilisation." There is evidence in some tribes pointing to a limited sexual communism. On the other hand, for example among certain low jungle tribes in India, "poor and despised as they are," there are "strict views as to the chastity of both married and unmarried women." "It is

* *Primitive Society*, by E. S. Hartland (Methuen, 1921), gives a full and careful summary of the evidence for a matrilineal stage in human society. (See pp. 25, 10, 23, 13.)

THE NEW MORALITY

superfluous to say there is nothing like free love among them.”*

Rousseau was not the first critic of civilisation to support his criticism by pointing to the noble savage. Hundreds of years before, it had been a favourite argument of great writers such as More or Montaigne, who were impressed by travellers' tales of the simplicity and happiness of life among the uncivilised peoples of the New World. But the argument goes back to the Stoics and even beyond them. For some centuries B.C. there was a widespread criticism of the corruptions and oppressions of historical life, which gave rise to such contrast-legends as that of the Garden of Eden. But it is only quite lately that this very ancient method of criticism has been systematically turned against the institution of the family. Hitherto men had dreamt of a primitive age when the people dwelt peacefully in their families, free from the ravages of lust and violence and greed.

The new attack on the Family aims at breaking up the tradition of sexual virtue or honour in the wife and mother of the family. The aim is also more general, being nothing less than the aim at complete and universal sexual freedom. Everything that stands in the way of this freedom must be destroyed. The claim of the family to set its interests above the interests of sexual freedom must be vigorously assaulted. But the assailants

* See also Driberg, p. 81 below.

are well aware that the inmost citadel of the position they are attacking is the tradition of sexual loyalty in the wife and mother. If this citadel can be demolished, short work can be made of any further resistance to the New Morality.

Those who attack the old fortress of wifely virtue claim that their campaign is allied to the movement for the emancipation of women. They even go so far as to claim that women themselves have already made such a breach in the walls that the attack may go forward with confidence. This is the way in which they interpret the modern woman's demand for an equal standard as against the bad old popular idea that there is one standard for men and another for women. The better sort of men have long been conscious of the injustice of treating married loyalty as a unilateral obligation: but tap-room and clubland have often agreed in saying that men will be men. In future, however, it will be difficult for anyone to voice in public* the need for a double standard. The rising sense of justice leads to a growing agreement that, if we are to have a standard, it must be the same for men as for women. The New Morality, as we have already seen, gives its own turn to this agreement.†

In order to shew the way in which the "moral slavery of women" was first established in place

* Not so long ago this was done by an old man in Parliament, to the indignation of many young men.

† See p. 66 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

of a former "moral freedom," we are offered a new history of the family, intended to prove that, perhaps 3,000 years ago, the "whole conception of female virtue" was invented in the interests of the acquisitive male. This story of violence and fraud we shall summarise in the next chapter. It is the story of the transition from the matrilineal to the patriarchal stage of society. An appeal is made to anthropology in favour of a natural and primitive sexual freedom for the wife and mother of the family. The social transition was due to the "intrusion of the economic motive." That was the serpent in the garden, and its work was the Fall of man from a condition of primitive sexual freedom.

Before we come to examine this new story of man's first disobedience and the Fall, we may prepare the way by a few quotations from well-known anthropologists, and especially from one whose researches have been made use of in the story we are presently to examine. Professor Malinowski has lately laid his view on the Family before a very wide public.* "I believe that the most disruptive element in the modern revolutionaty tendencies is the idea that parenthood can be made collective. If once we come to the point of doing away with the individual family, as the pivotal element of our society, we should be faced with a social catastrophe." Dr. Malinowski is concerned with an attack on the Family which

* See *The Listener*, February 11th and 18th, 1931.

ANTHROPOLOGY

(a) depicts a primitive stage of society in which the mother lived in a condition of promiscuous sexual intercourse;

(b) accounts for the rise of the historical family as due to the economic motive and the domination of women by men. This hypothesis appears to be adopted by the New Morality, but Dr. Malinowski declares that it is a distortion of the truth to attack marriage on the plea that it is an enslavement of woman by man. He adds that the analysis of primitive marriage shews marriage as a contract safeguarding the interests of the woman as well as granting privileges to the man.

The particular doctrine that drew this protest from Dr. Malinowski was expounded in a vast work by Dr. Briffault*, who set out to prove that the primitive family group consisted only of a woman and her offspring. The original social unit was not the family but the clan, which was entirely communistic in its sexual and economic relations. The family owes nothing to biological or sexual causes. It is an economic institution arising from the development of private property and the consequent domination of women by men.

In his broadcast lecture, Dr. Malinowski declared that there was absolutely no foundation for these views on the Family. They were based from first to last on the hypothesis of a primitive

* See *Christianity and Sex* (p. 17), by C. Dawson (Faber and Faber, 1s. net), from which I have borrowed here.

THE NEW MORALITY

“group-marriage” and “group-maternity.” But there was no evidence of any such state of things in the early history of mankind.* On the contrary, maternity and marriage belong to each other. “I believe that no human impulse is so deeply rooted as the maternal impulse in woman. I believe that it is individual and that it is bound up with the institution of marriage.” The last word about marriage “will always come from the women.” In a learned work of anthropology, we have it on the same authority† that the family is the starting point of all human organisation and the cradle of nascent culture.

Thus the attack on the Family and the claim that it is supported by anthropology, have not been allowed to proceed without a protest from the side of anthropology. Let us note also the view of a student of the history of Culture‡ who regards marriage as the social consecration of the biological functions by which the instinctive activities of sex and parenthood are socialised. Thus arises the family, a new synthesis of cultural and natural elements, for the sake of which man is forced to conform his instincts to a certain social pattern. The complete freedom from restraint which was formerly supposed to be characteristic of savage life is “a romantic myth.” In all primitive societies sexual relations are

* See also Driberg, p. 81 below.

† Quoted by Dawson in *Christianity and Sex*.

‡ Christopher Dawson, author of a remarkable book on *Religion and Progress*. The quotations are from his *Christianity and Sex*.

ANTHROPOLOGY

regulated by a "complex and meticulous system of restrictions." As Dr. Malinowski has shewn, the fundamental repression which lies at the root of social life . . . is a deliberate constructive repression of anti-social impulses. Malinowski is credited with the formula, "The beginning of culture implies the repression of instincts," and Mr. Dawson continues: "The institution of the family inevitably creates a vital tension which is creative as well as painful. For human culture is not instinctive. It has to be conquered by a continuous moral effort which involves the repression of natural instinct and the subordination and sacrifice of the individual impulse to the social purpose. It is the fundamental error of the modern hedonist to believe that man can abandon moral effort and throw off every repression and spiritual discipline and yet preserve all the achievements of culture."

Mr. Dawson is a professing Christian, and like all Christians must suffer from the suspicion, active in certain quarters, that when he speaks of the need of controlling sex for the sake of social purpose, he is labouring under the domination of irrational and superstitious taboos. But we have seen that Professor Jennings, who writes without reference to religion and whose scientific integrity need not be subjected to any such cavil, has indicated that the principle of sacrifice lies in the very heart of biological evolution. Dr. Malinowski may also be held free from the charge

THE NEW MORALITY

of superstition. Has he not just told the world,* with a touching expression of regret, that he is agnostic in religion? With some further words of his† we may fitly close this chapter of quotations :—

“ Anthropology teaches us two things : marriage and the family have changed ; they have developed ; they have grown and passed through various stages. But, through all the changes and vicissitudes of history and development, the family and marriage still remain the same twin institution ; they still emerge as a stable group showing throughout the same characteristics ; the group consisting of father and mother and their children, forming a joint household, co-operating economically, legally united by a contract and surrounded by religious sanctions which make the family into a moral unit.

Every society, then, teaches its members the two matrimonial commandments. The one given to the males is : if you want to possess a wife of your choice and have children with her, you will have to shoulder your share of duties and burdens. The one for the woman is : if you want to become a mother you must stick to the lover of your choosing and do your duty by him as your husband as well as by your children.”

It is not that Dr. Malinowski, any more than Professor Jennings, considers modern marriage to be perfect or beyond the need of reform :

“ The institution of marriage shows symptoms of mal-adjustment, as do all other institutions, for the simple reason that we are living in an epoch of rapid and profound change in the whole structure of our civilisation.”

But he believes in a cautious and constructive reform :

* cf. *Science and Religion* (Howe, 1930).

† See *The Listener*, February 11th and 18th, 1931.

ANTHROPOLOGY

“On the whole there is nothing as important and hopeful in this question as the progressive movement on the part of conservative agencies such as the Church of England or other Christian organisations. Nor is there anything as dangerous as to identify the cause of free thought and progress with a destructive attack against marriage, with the futile and cheap attacks against the Christian influence on marriage, attacks which have been becoming lamentably frequent in the last few years.”

In contrast with this temper of cautious and constructive reform the New Morality bends all its energies to the revolutionary task of disrupting the moral tie which binds sex and family together in unity. The ideal of integrity in the wife and mother, which includes the harmony of sexual loyalty with parental loyalty, is regarded as incompatible with the advance of civilisation. In order to suggest its incompatibility with primitive human nature, a startling use is made of Dr. Malinowski's anthropological study of the Trobriand Islanders.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE HOME.

In *Faith, Hope and Charity in Primitive Religion*, Dr. R. R. Marett has now (1932) offered to the general reader a guide by which he may pick his way amidst the unwieldy mass of material collected by the anthropological study of religion. The book is concerned with the earlier developments of higher life, such as religion and morality. For the savage, writes Dr. Marett, religion is “the central fact of his existence.” In regard to morality, one great effect of religion is the powerful influence of woman. She has *mana*. It was due to her that the two fundamental taboos of savage life were set in operation (1) the horror of shedding kindred blood, *her* blood; (2) the horror of incest.

THE NEW MORALITY

The primitive woman was animated by that "*parental care which would seem to be much more strong'y developed in our race than any gregarious tendency that it may likewise possess*" (p. 169, my italics). The home, rather than the herd, is the fountain of social good. Here the prime factor was the "will of the essential woman for peace in the home." Her feeling of kin was powerful enough to establish home-charity and home-chastity. The "mothering-principle" is a Charity which has "no gain in prospect unless it be the good of the race"; and throws itself "with abandon into the task of nursing and educating it forward."

In regard to home-charity, Dr. Marett suggests it is the way to world-peace. War would cease if "men could be made to feel and behave as if they were at home in the wide world" (p. 167). They would be "home-worthy" citizens of the world-home. In regard to sex, a like origin of self-control is suggested. To the casual observer, savage life may seem to be a "welter of amatory confusion," and, indeed, there is no such horror of fornication and adultery in themselves as there is of incest. Moreover, just as the foreigner is an enemy in the primitive world (p. 175), so the "primal law of chastity did not apply to the foreign woman" (p. 67). But the general impression of undisciplined confusion is false, for "the real savage, as we observe him, is so far from being a votary of free love that he is rather the victim of an all-too-legal matrimony" (p. 58). The root of the matter was in the home and in the influence of women. The choice lay between an "ever-rampant jealousy" and concord. "Fortunately for the future of humanity, the feeling of kin prevailed." Thus in human history arose the possibility of "gradually reducing sexual passion to sanity," so that it could be spread out "through the entire man" and become an "infinite passion to engender all things good" (p. 73). Thus, like charity, chastity, in the sense of self-control for good ends, began at home. In both cases the suggestion is clear that from homely origins, due above all to the woman, there is a wide-spreading influence for generous good which, one is allowed to hope or dream, may extend to all the world.

It should be added that Dr. Marett assumes, though it is a "speculative" matter, that kinship, for the earliest religion, was based on motherhood (pp. 61-2). He allows the function of father-right in providing a "stable legalism"

of justice which "paved the way to wider forms of social union," but it needs the establishment of a legal and moral equality between husband and wife before the home can resume "its archetypal function as a nursery of the gentler feelings" (p. 173). If this be so, then the modern freedom of women should lead to an era in which the life of home and family will take on a heightened value for the life of society as a whole.

Another anthropological book which, like the above, has appeared after my Essay was sent to the printer, is *At Home with the Savage*, by J. H. Driberg (George Routledge, 1932). Mr. Driberg has held high office in the administration of the Soudan and Uganda. He has lived in close intimacy with the native tribes. His aim is fundamentally practical, i.e. by the study of "facts as they are now and as they are shaping themselves" to enable a parental government to understand tribal culture and thus (only thus) to lead it in the way of a "real organic development." The result is a book of fascinating interest. Mr. Driberg has no great respect for academic anthropology as compared with field work. He takes no interest in pre-history, or in origins, or in "man long dead." He does not say whether he has worked among people like the Bushmen. His "field" of labour is among tribes that obviously have already passed through a long course of evolution.

(1) In regard to evidence from the customs of *living* savages, he repudiates the theory of an original promiscuity of group-marriage, as in the wild theories of the last century, when Maclellan, Bachofen and Morgan "visualized early man as a completely promiscuous creature living in unregulated hordes, a slave to his appetites and devoid of all parental responsibility." "Obsessed with the notion of promiscuity they imagined that early man could never be certain about paternity and that, consequently, matrilineal institutions must have preceded patrilineal." "As for promiscuity there is far more of that in our own civilization than in those savage communities" (pp. 78-9).

(2) Mr. Driberg does not believe that in matrilineal societies the status of the father suffers from lack of knowledge about paternity. The father "knows—and everyone else knows—that the spirits are all right in their way, but that they could do nothing without him," i.e. in producing the child (p. 72). As to the idea that the maternal uncle is an

THE NEW MORALITY

authority more congenial to children than their father, the uncle is a "far better chastiser than their father who, if too thorough, will get into trouble with his wife and his wife's family, a danger which her brother does not run" (p. 77).

(3) Mr. Driberg is clear that the "biological family is the same the whole world over," mother, father and children (p. 71). The "widest extension of the family idea gives birth to the clan," and the clan brings new characteristics of its own. And so, in the development of tribe and nation, the family idea is never entirely left behind.

CHAPTER VI

THE TROBRIAND ISLANDERS

WE must now take up the story which tells how wifely virtue was invented by the acquisitive male. It has a place of honour in the summary of the New Morality* which we are studying, and it dominates the argument from beginning to end. If the story stands, then the high morality of sex will find it hard to win encouragement from anthropology. And if by this or any other means the virtue of the wife and mother is obliged to be given up as a lost cause, and wife as well as husband is to be justified in the exercise of sexual freedom, then the way lies wide open before the New Morality: for husband and children and young people in general will naturally follow the example of the wife and mother.

The historical sketch of the rise and fall of the patriarchal family may be summed up as follows: The marriage customs of the Trobriand Islanders are taken as representing the early condition of society, to which in certain important respects civilisation is now likely to revert. These customs are taken as the starting-point of a cyclical process in history. No Trobriand Islander knows who his father is. In this he represents an early stage

* After the "Introduction" to *Marriage and Morals* we come at once to the two chapters, "Matrilinal Society" and "Patriarchal Systems."

THE NEW MORALITY

in human history prior to the stage when the patriarchal family began its long régime. But, so the argument runs, the recent progress of civilisation points to the break-up of the family, and probably the day will come when the wheel of history has rounded the full circle and once more—no one will know who his father is.

The crucial point of the story is the authority of the father in the family. The order of thought is as follows :—“the primitive father does not know that the child has any biological connection with himself,”¹ i.e. he does not understand his physiological part in the production of the child. Thus he has no authority over the child. But when he learns his part in the production of the child, a vast revolution ensues. He now regards the child as his property and as a valuable property. He seizes authority over the child, and over his wife’s “virtue,” and establishes the patriarchal family—which, three thousand years later, is now at last going to pieces.

“All civilised modern societies are based upon the patriarchal family” and “the whole conception of female virtue has been built up in order to make the patriarchal family possible.”² The social revolution by which matrilineal society was turned into patriarchal society was brought about by the discovery of physiological paternity. This discovery led to the gain of power for the father and the loss of sexual freedom for the mother.

The general reader will find in Dr. Hartland’s

THE TROBRIAND ISLANDERS

Primitive Society an authoritative summary of the facts about the importance and wide extension of matrilineal society in the history of mankind. The facts make a very strong impression on the mind and give much food for thought. But the reader cannot fail to note that Dr. Hartland regards as quite false the assumption that matrilineal societies are ignorant of the fact of physiological paternity. He writes that this ignorance has been alleged over and over again by travellers, but "*many people among whom there is no reasonable doubt of the paternity of children reckon their kinship only through women.*"* But if this be so, confusion falls upon the argument from the Trobriand Islanders, and the New Morality will be obliged to find some other origin for the whole conception of female virtue.

The argument loses its point if matrilineal society does not imply ignorance of paternity. But even if that implication were proved to hold good, the argument would still require another assumption if it were not to lose its force: the assumption, namely, that matrilineal society was once upon a time *universal* and that all mankind must have passed through this stage of development. We shall consider this assumption in a later chapter.

Before looking more closely at the argument from the Trobriand Islanders, and the tyranny over the wife's virtue which followed the establish-

* *Primitive Society*, pp. 12-13 (my italics). See also Driberg, p. 81 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

ment of paternal power, let us observe how little value is allowed to the institution of paternity to-day. It may be useful for children to be "brought into touch with a masculine outlook on life," but "I cannot see that the gain is very profound."³ In fortunate cases the father may have "a certain limited usefulness."⁴ It may indeed be good for the fathers themselves to be fathers, but if fatherhood were abolished "whether the effect upon men would be good or bad, I do not venture to say,"⁵ It is recognised that the evidence of life insurance and of self-sacrifice on behalf of children's education shews that in some families paternal feeling is fine and strong. But it is reduced where civilisation is high,⁶ and as for the wage-earners, the Factory Acts and other political measures have dried up the wage-earning father's desire for children now that he cannot hire them out till they "die of overwork."⁷ On the whole "there is much to be said for the view that the average man in all ages has had as many children as it paid him to have, no more and no less."^{*} We are given to understand that the key to these problems of feeling and instinct, paternal as well as maternal, is really the dominance of the acquisitive instinct over the parental. The conclusion seems to be that, in view of the growth of State services, the father "will cease to serve

* This suggestion may apply to "civilised" mankind, as described by the author, but not to savages. It ignores, for example, the very widespread sense of duty to ancestors who may be reincarnate in the children.

any obvious purpose"⁸ and his abolition would be a "gain to civilisation."⁹ Thus the advance of civilisation would wheel round again to the happy condition of the Trobriand Islanders.

There are many people to whom parenthood has been a revelation of life, and an experience which enabled them to understand in a new way the meaning of human nature, of manhood, womanhood, childhood. Such persons will fail to see the point of the New Morality if they simply rule it out as a result of unusual temperament or of an unfortunate experience of life. The New Morality is not an affair of temperament or experience. Or at least we may say it is not essentially that. It is an affair of perfectly cool and clear-sighted logic. It starts from a judgment of value in favour of sexual freedom. Here, indeed, the element of warm feeling is very strong. But all the later stages of the argument are cool and logical. This sexual logic is as severe as the Soviet logic. Granted the original judgment, everything else follows. For example, the institution of fatherhood belongs to a system which requires sexual loyalty on the part of the wife. Therefore it must be attacked and destroyed.

We now come to the story itself which, we are assured, "throws a flood of light on the psychology of paternity." "The fact has been established that, among these islanders, people are not known to have fathers." "It is thought that spirits

THE NEW MORALITY

bring children and insert them into their mothers . . . unmarried men and girls live a life of complete free love, but for *some unknown reason** unmarried girls seldom conceive. *Oddly enough** it is considered disgraceful when they do . . . Sooner or later the girl grows tired of variety and marries. She goes to live in her husband's village . . . Her husband is not regarded as having any blood-relationship to the children and descent is traced solely through the female line. The kind of authority which is elsewhere exercised by the father is . . . vested in the maternal uncle." But the uncle "sees little of the children except when they are away from their mother and their home." "This admirable system secures for the children a measure of affection without discipline which is unknown elsewhere."† And on a later page, "The primitive father does not know that the child has any biological connection with himself," "he has no sense of property in the child," and "he sees no biological importance in safeguarding his wife's virtue."¹⁰ Here we meet the leading motives of the "New Morality"—the unimportance of paternity and notably of paternal authority, the unimportance also of chastity in the unmarried woman and of fidelity in the married.

* *Marriage and Morals* (p. 20 ff.). (My italics). All this mystery is too lightly passed over. A missionary of great experience tells me that, among the savages he has known, these unfertile love affairs are not according to nature. Another weak point in the whole story is that (p. 22) "*strangely enough* it is supposed that children resemble their mother's husbands."

† As to the spirits that bring the children and the uncle who rules them, see Driberg, p. 81-2 above.

THE TROBRIAND ISLANDERS

The story then moves to the foundation of the patriarchal family. A complete revolution in primitive morals came with the discovery of physiological paternity. This discovery inflamed the acquisitive instinct of the male, so that "fathers having discovered the fact of their (own) existence proceeded everywhere to exploit it to the uttermost." The hearth-fires of the family-instinct, if any, became dim before the blaze of male acquisitiveness. "A legitimate child is a continuation of a man's ego, and his affection for the child is a form of egoism."¹¹ In order to make sure of legitimacy the subjection of women was invented "as the only means of securing their virtue . . . love as a relation between men and women was ruined by the desire to make sure of the legitimacy of children." In early agricultural and pastoral communities "multiplication of sons was as advantageous as multiplication of flocks and herds,"¹² and the "primary function" of a wife came to be that of a "lucrative domestic animal."¹³ It is only on the father's account that "feminine virtue has been thought essential to the family."¹⁴ The wife and the child "become his property."¹⁵ In order to secure this selfish advantage and "in order to make sure that the children will work for the father" (not for the family) the father "brings religion to bear, to cause his wife and children to have a sense of duty towards him."¹⁶ Far from the sons having any natural regard for their fathers, there was a

THE NEW MORALITY

great temptation to parricide. Accordingly, the Hebrew father invented a deceitful Commandment (the fifth), which would have run more honestly "that *their* (the parents') days may be long in the land."* Thus religion, sexual morality and family sentiment were all made to minister to the acquisitive and egoistic instinct of the male.

In regard to the early alliance of political power with religion, we may interpose one comment. Everyone knows that the theocratic Family, like the theocratic State, was the form by which peace and order were imposed in all the great pre-classical civilisations, and that such a theocracy survived for many centuries after men began to think for themselves. But everyone knows also, as Lincoln pointed out, that it is impossible to fool all the people all the time. Communities, both familial and political, needed peace and order, and acquiesced in the only known method of securing them. No doubt there was much harshness, selfishness and cruelty in the exercise of power; but the view that authority, both parental and religious, was just a clever and calculated "plant"—a view common enough as regards religion in the philosophy of the eighteenth century—would find little support from the historians of to-day.

Thus the researches of anthropology are used to remove the supreme impediment in the way

* *Marriage and Morals*, p. 137. But the Hebrew mother is also in the Commandment! As to the primitive tendency to parricide, see p. 103 below.

of the New Morality, the strong tradition of the family on the point of sexual honour in the wife and mother. If it be shewn that the whole conception of female virtue has no other foundation than a fraud on the part of the selfish male, then the point of honour vanishes into thin air.

But if Dr. Hartland and other authorities are to be trusted, the mystery of paternity is *not* a secret unknown to matrilineal societies.

Dr. Hartland himself can offer no such simple account of the rise of patrilineal out of matrilineal kinship.* Migrations, conquests, marriage by capture, constant minglings of race and custom, are some of the causes which must have had "an immeasurable effect on the organisation of the most conservative peoples." The "true goal," he writes, is the "formal recognition of kinship on both sides, such as is the foundation of society in the highest civilisation."

Not long after I had come across the version of the New Morality which we have been reviewing, an old college friend, now the Bishop of New Guinea, whom I had not seen for nearly forty years, came to stay a night with us. Though engaged in reflection upon the Trobriand Islanders I had never looked them up on a map. Imagine the pleasure of finding that my friend, though his work does not lie amongst them, lives, so to speak, next door to them and had met Dr. Malinowski out there. He speaks with great respect of Dr.

* *Primitive Society*, pp. 160-1.

THE NEW MORALITY

Malinowski's investigations, though disagreeing here and there with his results. Of course I asked my friend at once whether he knew anything about Matrilineal Societies. He replied that his life and work are spent amongst them. Well, is it true that the matrilineal system goes with ignorance of paternity? "Not at all," he replied, "they know very well who the fathers are." What, then, about authority over the children? Is it true that the knowledge of paternity makes all the difference, taking authority away from the maternal uncle and giving it now to the father? "Not at all;" for example, "if a father wants his child baptised the maternal uncle can forbid it." Did the Bishop dispute the statements of Dr. Malinowski? No, for he "had not worked among the Trobriand Islanders." Well, did he agree with Dr. Hartland that, though it was a common mistake, yet it was a real mistake to generalise about the ignorance of paternity in Matrilineal Societies, and to base any argument on that generalisation? To this my friend replied that it would be a shaky argument that was built on any such basis.

One last point. The New Morality is supported by a protest against the unhealthy and unprimitive notion of repressing the instinct of sex in conformity with social purpose. Whether or no Matrilineal Societies are really "primitive," nothing could be less true than a large generalisation about their total lack of restriction upon the

THE TROBRIAND ISLANDERS

exercise of sex. As my friend, the Bishop of New Guinea, told me, among these savage peoples the authority of the elders is breaking down under the influence of the white man's civilisation. But the old order was very strict indeed, authoritative, religious ; and the problem of teaching a sense of responsibility to those who get the new sense of freedom is a very serious problem. There is need for a New Morality. Yet the task of the Christian teacher is not just to teach a strictness unknown before. The native and ancient code of these savages was far from approving promiscuous adultery. Under the old code, if a husband caught his wife with another man, he drove one spear through them both ; and the homicide gave no rise to the customary blood-feud. The adulterer's clan would not take up the case or demand a life for a life. But Government has now put an end to these rudimentary methods of justice.

At the end of our conversation I felt more than ever sure that the New Morality would do itself no good by attempting to rule out the tradition of wifely honour on the ground that it was originally invented by man on the discovery of his own paternity.

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

¹ p. 136.

² p. 19.

³ p. 155.

⁴ p. 157.

⁵ p. 149.

⁶ p. 158.

⁷ p. 141.

⁸ p. 240.

⁹ p. 173.

¹⁰ p. 136.

¹¹ p. 26.

¹² p. 29.

¹³ p. 106.

¹⁴ p. 134.

¹⁵ p. 136.

¹⁶ pp. 136-7.

CHAPTER VII

PRIMITIVE MAN

PATERNAL authority is regarded by the New Morality as a quarry to be hunted and harried, in and out. It has been the "ruin of love between men and women." The new and "dynamic" psychology adds that it has been the scourge of the child and the ruin of the family. Father-domination is a fashionable object of missiles.* Celebrated men put their father's name in the pillory. They do not tell us whether they have had, as fathers, any experience of rearing such angular nestlings as they probably were themselves. The campaign shews signs of the habit of "frightful exaggeration" which has been already noted in disciples of the New Psychology. We have a hint that the attack may presently include the subject of mother-domination.†

In the last chapter we followed the story of the establishment of paternal authority which makes it a result of the discovery of his fatherhood by the father : and we saw that the story broke down

* The eighteenth century *aristo*, the famous Lord Chesterfield, in his letters to a son, wrote "as fathers commonly go, it is seldom a misfortune to be fatherless." He sees in women two passions, vanity and love. He advises his son of the advantages of a love affair with a woman of fashion.

† See p. 14 above.

because it assumed there was no knowledge of paternity in matrilineal societies; whereas in many such societies they know very well who the father is. We shall now see that in yet another respect the whole anthropological story has extremely precarious foundations. It appears to be contrary to the evidence to assume that all mankind has passed through the matrilineal stage of society, or that matrilineal society is equivalent to primitive society. Even if it were true that women have complete sexual freedom in matrilineal society, that would not prove this freedom to be a feature of primitive society.

The version of the New Morality that now engages our attention, accepts the hypothesis of a "primitive monogamy,"¹ but assumes, on the evidence of the Trobriand culture, that the "primitive father" sees "no biological importance in safeguarding the virtue of his wife."² The argument requires the assumption that in primitive society there was a sexual freedom for the wife which was afterwards taken away, and that the conception of female virtue, therefore, implies a degeneration from the morality of primitive man.

Although the argument in question appears to be wrong, both in its facts and in its inferences, it is in harmony with some of the most recent anthropology in one important particular: namely, in seeing not only progress but also degeneration in the history of human development. This

THE NEW MORALITY

readiness to admit degeneration is common to two new books from which quotations will now be made. Their authors are in reaction against the rough and ready method of applying the biological idea of evolution to human affairs without taking account of the facts of history. They do not accept the rule of thumb by which you may place yourself at any stage of history and be quite sure that the previous stage was lower in quality and value. They face the truth that man in the individual and in the group may be and often has been a backslider. They do not found history on a mechanical law of continuous progress : nor do they assume that only the lowest degree of social value is to be found in the life of primitive man. In particular, they find no evidence that sexual freedom, rather than the regulation of sex in the interest of the family, was a condition of primitive man.

In *Human History** we may read of a large number of quite recent investigations into the life of the most primitive people now extant. Here we come as near to original humanity as any *living* evidence can bring us. There are still many peoples scattered about the world, outside or on the extreme edges of even the most rudimentary civilisation, peoples who have no real clothes, no real houses, no real property, no political system, no social distinctions, no war, no human

* *Human History* (Jonathan Cape, 1930), by G. Elliot Smith, Professor of Anatomy in University of London, President of Anthropological Section of British Association, 1912.

sacrifice, no torture. They are at the food-gathering and not yet at the food-producing stage. They share and eat what they gather or catch, and they lay up nothing for the morrow. Probably these peoples have lived in the same way for well over 6,000 years. The whole type of life is surprisingly uniform, in spite of great varieties of climate and environment; and it seems to include little or no impulse towards what is called civilisation. Yet these peoples when left to themselves appear to be uniformly peaceful and happy. This primitive food-gathering type of life has been studied in the African Pygmies and Bushmen, in the Veddahs of Ceylon, in the Semang of the Malay Peninsula, in the Punan of Borneo, and so forth. It is of interest to observe that their "natural" code of morality corresponds very closely to the Second Table of the Hebrew Decalogue. For example, the African Pygmies, as reported by van den Bergh in 1922, base their society on the family. Elders are respected and they love their children; murder, adultery and theft are hardly known among them. The last Commandment of the Decalogue would not fully apply, as the food-gatherer has no houses or servants or oxen or asses to excite the covetous desire of his neighbours. He lives with and in his relatives, and, says Dr. Elliot Smith, contact with civilisation nearly always brings demoralisation. Once innocence is lost "it needs much wisdom and goodness to recover it."

THE NEW MORALITY

Evidently there are few signs of a mechanical law of progress, but when civilisation comes there are clear signs of a widespread moral degeneration. These signs, as we all know, have convinced not only the Hebrews and the Christians, but also the Stoics, the Roman lawyers and the philosophers right up to Rousseau, that civilisation has in many respects lost the right way and needs restoration.

What, then, of the sex-life of these uncivilised and primitive peoples? Strangely enough, despite the fact that "polygamy is not unknown" among the anthropoid apes who are biologically nearest of the animals, the monogamous family is the normal form of primitive sex-life. Dr. Elliot Smith says that no explanation has yet been offered of this widespread monogamy.

The second book I wish to quote confirms in a methodical way this account of the most primitive form of human society that lies within our ken. Dr. W. Schmidt, an anthropologist of high eminence, and Professor in the Institute of Vienna, is publishing during the course of many years, a great book entitled *Ursprung der Gottesidee*, two volumes of which have appeared. In 1930 he issued a Manual which covers the ground not only of these two volumes, but also of the two volumes that are yet to come. This has been translated into English.* Professor Schmidt criticises the

* *The Origin and Growth of Religion*, translated by H. J. Rose, Professor of Greek in the University of S. Andrews (Methuen, 1931).

scientific methods of Dr. Elliot Smith but, using much the same kind of material, confirms and emphasises the belief in a "primitive culture"* which is indicated in the sketch I have given above.

Professor Schmidt agrees with Malinowski and others in deprecating the wrongful use of anthropology. The extreme example of this abuse is to be found in Dr. Freud, also of Vienna. Just as the New Morality assumes that *matrilineal* society is primitive society and is a stage through which all mankind must have passed, so Dr. Freud assumes the primitive and universal character of *totemistic* society.

Let us follow the argument by which Dr. Schmidt believes both these assumptions to be demolished, taking first the case of Dr. Freud. Totemism is the "belief of certain peoples that their families and clans stand in a definite blood-relationship to particular species of animals." First made widely known by McLennan in 1866, it was taken up by his pupil Robertson Smith, who worked it out in the eighties, especially in connection with Semitic religion. His theory of sacrifice among the Semites depends on the view that "the victim was the totem animal, of the same blood and the same stock as the god to whom the sacrifice was made and as the man who made it." Generally this animal might not be killed or eaten, but on certain festivals it was

* This phrase is used in a comparative sense. No one pretends to know the "culture" of the earliest human beings.

killed for a communal meal of its flesh and blood. In support of this view, Robertson Smith was able to quote one incident recorded in the life of a Christian hermit, the incident shewing that, in case of urgent need, certain Bedouin would kill and eat a camel. On this slender evidence was erected the theory of the totemic sacrifice and communion. It was taken up with "fiery zeal" by Salamon Reinach, e.g. in his *Orpheus* (1909). It was also taken up by F. B. Jevons: but before the end of his career he abandoned the hypothesis that all sacrifice arose from the totemic communion sacrifice.

The chief service in working out the astonishing range of facts about totemism in savage life has been performed by Sir J. G. Frazer. From the time that he published his *Totemism* in 1887 to the date of his *magnum opus* on the subject (*Totemism and Exogamy*, 1910) he changed three times his own interpretation of the facts. Sir J. G. Frazer never adopted the theory of Robertson Smith. He had noted four cases of killing a sacred animal which might be a totem, but in none of these cases was it eaten by the worshippers. Dr. Schmidt adds that many hundreds of totemic peoples have been investigated, but only four have anything like the totemic communion feast, and these four races are not primitives but among the "most modern totemic peoples."

Further, Sir J. G. Frazer had rejected as early as 1910 the whole idea that totemism is a religious

phenomenon. It is probably due to the influence of this great scholar that "there has never been a definite school which made totemism the foundation of all religions."

But just about this stage in the discussion came the publication of Dr. Freud (1912), in which totemism was made not only the origin of all religion but also the origin of all culture, morality and social order ! Here was to be found the essence of primitive human nature.

The theory of the Œdipus complex has been described by one of Dr. Freud's disciples as the locomotive which has drawn the master's triumphal car all around the globe. It deals with the suppressed desires to kill one's father and to marry one's mother. It has two bases in anthropology :

(1) The idea of the primitive polygamous herd, consisting of a male, a number of females, and a number of young. We have already seen that this is an idea with little support from recent anthropology. The Freudian theory adopts the Darwinian suggestion that when the young males grow up they covet the females, but are fought off by the father of the herd. They therefore hate the father and desire his wives.

(2) Then comes a master-stroke of synthesis. Swallowing whole the unsubstantial theory of Robertson Smith, that religion is sacrifice and sacrifice is the killing and eating of the totem animal, Dr. Freud explains that the primitive sons not only killed the father of the herd and took his

wives, but proceeded to eat him. Such was the character of the primitive culture which has determined the whole course of human history and the psychology of human nature. Dr. Freud says it was a matter of course for these "cannibal savages" to eat their victim. They had not only hated their father. They had also admired his strength. So they ate him to make his strength their own. Dr. Freud goes on: "The totemic banquet, perhaps the first feast mankind ever celebrated, was the repetition, the festival of remembrance, of this noteworthy criminal deed, with which so much began—the organisation of society, moral restrictions, and religion."!!

Yet more: though the totem feast was a joyful remembrance of the original parricide, the sense of guilt in the sons was not to be stifled. It was allayed by the establishment of the two fundamental taboos of totemism: the members of the clan must *not* as a rule kill the totem animal, and in token of *not* taking the father's wives they must not marry within the clan. Hence the custom of exogamy. But there remain deep in the human heart as the source of the Œdipus complex, the suppressed desires to kill one's father and marry one's mother.

Finally: the child hates his father, but also loves him. Often he transfers the hatred to some beast. Hence the deep-seated belief in the kinship of man with some particular animal, and the Freudian psychological explanation of totemism. The

zenith of hideous grotesque is reached in the application of this theory to Christian worship, in which a son dies a sacrificial death in order to remove the sense of guilt, and at the same time there is a glad commemoration of the murder of the original father now identified with the god of the clan.

But Freud's triumphal procession round the globe comes to grief on a single obstacle. Even if there were any evidence, which there never has been, of the totemic communion feast, this would prove nothing in regard to primitive man. For ethnology has proved that primitive society was no more totemic than it was matrilineal. Evidence is abundant of a much older culture in which, if anywhere, we must seek the origins of religion, morality and social order. In this older culture we find a religion akin to monotheism, a society and a morality firmly established under the authority of the father; no trace of sacrifice, except of first-fruits; no cannibalism, no sexual promiscuity; but a "clear, fully developed marriage in the proper sense, which is monogamous among a large number of these peoples, moderately polygamous among some few." Parricide "could simply never enter these peoples' heads at all:" for, any kind of murder, especially within their own clan, is exceedingly rare.*

Totemism, therefore, is "now seen to be a later stage of development, but even as such

* Schmidt (*op. cit.*), pp. 114-115.

THE NEW MORALITY

it is not universal nor have all peoples passed through it." For example "Frazer has proved that the three great ruling races, the Indo-Europeans, the Hamito-Semites and the Ural-Altaics had originally no totemism, but acquired it here and there on their many travels" and then mostly, and only, in weakened forms.

While we have been following Professor Schmidt in his criticism of Dr. Freud some of my readers may have been reminded of the "dynamic psychologies" mentioned above,* and of the dictum that "Parents and children love one another unnaturally and hate each other naturally." But the New Morality, though making much use of "uprushes from the unconscious" and "repressions" and "taboos," must not be simply identified with the theories of Dr. Freud. There is, it holds, truth in them, but only one side of the truth.³

But I do not venture to say much about the psychology of the New Morality. We may glance in that direction later on. At present we are concerned with its use of anthropology, and my readers may be willing to follow Dr. Schmidt a little further on the question of primitive man.

In regard to his own special subject, the science of religion, as well as in regard to ethnology and sociology, Schmidt remarks that the Evolutionist school of the nineteenth century made a misuse of its own popular psychology,

* See p. 15 above.

PRIMITIVE MAN

imagining that certain psychological states follow on one another of necessity, so that, if one of them were found to be in living operation, the sequence of the rest could be determined therefrom without any historical investigation. This necessary sequence was explained in the light of certain judgments of value according to which the "lower, the more bestial and ugly must also be the older." But the history of culture should avoid as far as possible the use of such judgments of value and let the facts and the order of facts speak for themselves. It is a great mistake to choose beforehand a pattern of development* and then to force the facts until they conform to it. In accordance with these views on method, there began in Germany, early in this century, a reaction from Evolutionism in favour of a more historical method of ethnology. This method seeks (a) accuracy about the facts, (b) a careful examination of their meaning in and for the circle of culture† in which they are found, (c) an attempt to find the relation of the various circles or complexes of culture and to arrange them in the order of their historical development. As regards these relationships and developments it has to be noted, for example, that cultures can travel far ; as the culture

* As Professor F. W. Maitland said long ago, "We are learning that the attempt to construct a normal programme for all portions of mankind is idle and unscientific." (Quoted by Sir F. Pollock in his *Notes on Maine*.)

† A "culture" means a whole way of living, the various elements being religion, the family, the wider social or political order, industry, etc., etc. The method referred to in the text is that of Gräbner and his Berlin school of ethnology.

THE NEW MORALITY

of Central Asia is proved to have travelled far enough to influence Eskimo religion. Again, by constant migrations and contacts one culture may meet and cross with another, or cut it in two, or victoriously overlay it. All these interactions of culture are of the greatest historical importance. If they are ignored, there is no chance of finding which is the earlier or the more primitive. By using the historical method Dr. Schmidt believes it possible already to make out a good deal of the truth concerning the early development of culture. Although the work is only beginning, certain points seem to be clear.

If we may assume that the original home of mankind was in Asia, migrations to America, Africa and Australasia would take place through the narrow ways of the Behring Straits, the isthmus of Suez, and a string of islands in the Pacific. Passing through these narrow ways the earliest migrations would be pressed upon by later movements, and in the course of many centuries would be pushed by more advanced peoples into the far extremities or into the less desirable and more inaccessible regions of the continent. Thus we find in America certain primitive Algonquin behind the Rocky Mountains, some primitive Eskimo in the north, and in the extreme south the people of Tierra del Fuego. Or again in Africa there are the Pygmies and the Bushmen, in Asia the Samoyeds and Ainu in the extreme

north and the Pygmies in the South-East. In Australia the oldest inhabitants are in the South-East. Most frequently these more primitive peoples have been driven to their present quarters by totemistic or matrilineal invaders. In all these cases the geographical position of the race shews that it is the oldest in the continent, and all considerations join to indicate that the culture of these tribes is older than that of the invaders.

It is of great interest to find that this geographical argument is supported by the economic and social condition of these peoples. They are food-gatherers, all of them, and have not yet learnt to assist or exploit Nature in getting their food. Housing, clothing, weapons, tools are all in a generally primitive state. Socially the individual family plays the fundamental and decisive part. They are neither totemistic nor matrilineal. As to religion, though we have no right to say we know it in its most primitive form, yet without doubt the Supreme Being is dominant among all these peoples and is found in none of the later cultures in so clear, definite, vivid and direct a form. It ought not to be said that this implies everywhere a clear monotheism, but in nearly every separate area of this culture the First Father plays an important part, especially in the initiation ceremonies which introduce the young to the most important things in life and especially in family life. On the whole, even where there are other superior beings, the Supreme Being is so much above

THE NEW MORALITY

them as to justify us in speaking of Monotheism. Wherever there is any address to him in all these areas, he is addressed as Father. All that is good and only what is good comes from him. He is the giver of the moral law. Generally speaking he is opposed to adultery, fornication and pre-nuptial unchastity; and in favour of honesty and of helping those who are in need. The readiness of these peoples to submit their wills to such precepts is all the more remarkable because they have complete social and political freedom. The only recognised authority is that of the father over children of minor age. Without exception these peoples believe in a future life. I think we may say, in modern phrase, there is a firm belief in the coincidence of highest value with highest reality: for goodness and power meet in the Supreme Being.

I have drawn on Dr. Schmidt for this information about the Supreme Being, as conceived by these most primitive of all living races, not by any means in order to branch-off into theology, but only in order to note how among these early peoples we may assert, with whatever needful cautions and reservations, the close association of a religious belief akin to Monotheism with an ethical and social code governed by the idea of the family. The Supreme Good is expressed among men principally by the life of the family.

A few words may be added about the later story of human culture. Dr. Schmidt explains

that three non-primitive but very early types of culture are traceable, constituting the "Primary Culture." It is not claimed that there is evidence to shew any relation of before and after between these types. They are fundamentally differentiated by three ways in which mankind learnt to persuade Nature to help the food-supply.

(a) In the "primitive" food-gathering culture, the women hunt for vegetable food while the men hunt for animal food. But at a later stage the women learn to cultivate plants and in this horticultural order of society they gain great social importance. Descent is traced through the women. This Matrilineal Culture came to have a distinctive character of its own in social and religious affairs.

(b) In the "primitive" culture, the men hunt for animal food. But later they learn to cultivate animals, becoming cattle-breeders and the like. Hence the culture of the Pastoral Nomads. They are patrilineal. Among them rise the great conquering and ruling races, such as the Indo-Europeans and the Semites.

(c) Another change came through the development of hunting. The higher hunters made progress through the invention of weapons and tools. Hence a growing consciousness of power over Nature and a strengthening of the idea of magic, to which totemism is allied. Arts, crafts and trades distinguish this culture. These totemistic peoples tend to town-life as the

THE NEW MORALITY

matrilineal tend to village-life. Like the Pastoral Nomads they are patrilineal.

In giving a rough, but I hope not unfaithful, impression of the ethnological perspective as depicted by Dr. Schmidt, I have had the hope of shewing, at the very least, how precarious is any story of the human family which depends upon the assumption that either the matrilineal or the totemistic culture was primitive, or was ever universal, or was a stage through which all mankind must have passed. Not least precarious is the assumption of the New Morality that the origin of the historical family is to be sought in the violent revolution from matrilineal to patrilineal society; or the assumption that the matrilineal and the primitive are one and the same thing; or that sexual freedom is a primitive condition which should now be restored.

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

¹ p. 106

² p. 136.

³ p. 151.

CHAPTER VIII

HISTORY

WE have dealt at some length with the bearing of Biology and Anthropology upon our subject, because the modern attack upon the family seeks so often to turn the flank of our moral tradition by using speculative ideas about the primitive nature and condition of humanity. No one has any certain knowledge of these matters. When we do not know, we are at liberty to indulge in speculation : but if we allow ourselves to speculate, we ought to confess that, usually, there is some conclusion which it would please us to establish and that the conclusion pleases us because it confirms our valuations. All of us like to be able to say, "That is right—and natural." Yet we should be as fair as possible to the facts, so far as they are known. The use which we have seen to be made of the story of the Trobriand Islanders is rather too obviously influenced by a certain valuation of sexual freedom and a desire to find this valuation confirmed by an appeal to what is primitive and natural. We shall see a good deal of the same influence at work when we follow the story into the era of civilisation.

At the risk of being tedious to my readers, I will ask them to reflect for a little on the type

THE NEW MORALITY

of history which depends on valuations. For this is the type of history with which we have to do in this sketch of sex and family. We have to enquire whether it is a good example of the type.

The philosophic historian is not principally concerned with the critical determination of the facts. He is content in general to leave that task to the special departments. But he seeks to form a view of the whole development of human life as it struggles to unfold and realise its potentialities of value. In order to do this he is bound, as a philosopher, to work with a criterion of value so that he may be able to form a judgment on the ups and downs of progress and regress, and discover, if he can, some underlying continuity of direction in the whole process of development. This quest of continuity rises from a judgment of faith. Just as the scientist is moved by a faith in the unity and continuity of the physical world, so the historian has faith in the unity and continuity of the historical world.

There is, however, a difference in kind between the values which guide the work of physical science and those which guide the philosophy of history. In the former, truth is metrical and both the means and the end of the study lie within the sphere of the measurable. In the latter, all interpretation depends upon a critical appreciation of the ends or values or purposes of living beings, elements which are obviously immeasurable. For this interpretation of history there is needed a

judgment of faith in the continuity of history, in some living trend or direction ; and a judgment upon values, so that the historian may appreciate the way in which successive generations realise, or fail to realise, an unfolding or development of the inner tendency and meaning of human life.

Among the values which guide the historian are the moral values. He cannot overlook the characteristic of human life which enables a man to say, "I ought." Whenever a man says this, and whenever he looks closely into the meaning of what he says, he finds a conviction that his conduct is in the presence of some standard of right. It is judged according to its conformity or nonconformity with a right purpose of life. The moral sense, or conscience, or conviction of right and wrong, suggests or urges to choose the right and reject the wrong. The moral philosopher seeks to make clear what is involved in this sense of ought, so that it may be enlightened and developed by reason. He has always attempted to construct a common ideal of good life and to convince men that this ideal belongs to them and they to it and through it to others. Conscience is viewed as bringing the pressure of the ideal to bear upon the individual life, training and organising instinct and impulse, feeling and desire, in order to build up a character that may serve the common ideal of life and find happiness in this service. Morality implies an inclusive purpose

THE NEW MORALITY

of life which is high enough and wide enough and deep enough to include all men and the whole man. There can be no morality without appreciation of purpose, nor any philosophy of history without a critical valuation of the moral purposes which successive generations have chosen to be the guides of their life.

The finest men and women of each successive period have usually been devoted to some special aspect of the high purpose of life. The Greeks sought truth and beauty, the Romans political order, the Cromwellians liberty of worship, the men of the early French Revolution political and social equality, the English Liberals political freedom, the Socialists social justice, the Communists economic equality. These and other ideals or aspects of purpose have won the devotion of men and women who believed there was a development of good life waiting to be helped to the birth, and were ready to help it even at great sacrifice.

Often there is a conflict between two ideas of right purpose. For example, we are now required to make a very important judgment of value. We *may* give devotion to the family as a unique and indispensable organisation of human value and purpose, or we *may* consider that sexual freedom has so eminent a worth that the family ought to be sacrificed to it. On our decision of this matter the historian of the future will pronounce his moral verdict and judge whether

HISTORY

this generation made its choice in harmony with the true direction and development of human life.

The advocates of the New Morality have given us their judgment of value in this particular conflict of opinion. They seek to support their judgment by a bird's-eye view of history. We have looked at their use of biology and anthropology. We must now glance at their interpretation of history in the era of civilisation. It is governed by a judgment that sexual freedom is of eminent value, and by a judgment of faith that civilisation is moved by an inner purpose or direction towards the realisation of this value. The significant point of departure is the transition from a "primitive" culture, in which there was sexual freedom, to a civilised stage in which this freedom was lost. But, we read, it was lost only for a while. For the inner direction of civilisation has steadily worked towards the emancipation of sex from social responsibility or purpose. This work is now approaching completion. The consequences for the family are very unfortunate. Thus, we are confronted by a historical sketch which is governed by a philosophy of civilisation.

Apart from the direction in favour of sexual freedom, our attention is not invited to any other way in which the process of civilisation promotes positive social values. But there is an overwhelming emphasis on its power of disintegrating social traditions, and of liberating the individual from any restraint upon his freedom, especially

upon the freedom of satisfying his romantic emotions. Devotion to the "welfare of posterity" is suggested as an ideal for civilised men and women,¹ but this great phrase is interpreted* as meaning nothing but progress in "cleverness."

A philosophy of life which ascribes to civilisation such a poverty of ends and so great a power of dissolving the customs which are intended to conserve the values of experience is bound to act as a powerful check on the hope of good purpose in life. It suggests that perhaps after all there is nothing in the nature of things to encourage the development of life. It brings to mind those contemporary writers who hold that science has justified Epicurus and has exploded the belief that above and beyond mankind there is any element in the universe which is other than indifferent to human ideals. The great process of Reality, they say, flows along like a dark stream unlit by living purpose: and our little thoughts of value are no more than vain bubbles on the surface of the stream, blown up for a passing moment, then sinking or bursting for ever, without significance either in their inflation or in their deflation. It is a philosophy of discouragement, and its faith in social values is no better than a faith in their ultimate vanity. Only it seems to say, *Carpe diem*: arrange for the satisfaction of your individual emotions. In giving freedom for these satisfactions, civilisation has

* See p. 265 below.

HISTORY

a task of value; it destroys all traditions of restraint and of subordination to social purpose. Other hope of value it has little to offer. As one writer says, "All that is left to us is the art of love."

In a later chapter we may look again at the relation which exists between the philosophy of history underlying the New Morality and the philosophy of Ultimate Vanity which divorces value from reality. For the present we must do no more than notice the way in which this latter form of negative philosophy would destroy all faith in the validity of any constructive social purpose. It would forbid us to believe in any purpose dwelling in the phenomena of human nature and history which is *given* to us, and not only to us but also to the generations that are to come. Such a veto, if effective, would have serious results in practice. We all have to live and work with and for others, and we can do it but poorly unless we have some kind of a faith in purpose, some sort of working hypothesis accepted if only as the nobler option. There are very few of those who seek to act with the good will to make themselves and the world a little better, who are not moved by conscious or unconscious belief that there is a good purpose for human society and that the nature of reality is friendly to this purpose. I think that my own impression, after years of association with many different groups of social workers, would be confirmed

THE NEW MORALITY

by the testimony of wide circles. It is the impression that if all faith in purpose, a purpose greater than ourselves and more real than ourselves, be cut clean out of the mind, the energies of social reform will soon shew symptoms of a creeping paralysis. The legs of the frog may kick for a while when his spine has been cut, but only for a while. This belief, that there is a living element deep in the nature of things that tends to foster life and the good life, is a kind of natural religion among those who in any land or age give their lives to work for justice or happiness.

Let us turn to the philosophical interpretation of civilisation and of its bearing on sex and the family, as it is made to subserve the interests of the New Morality. The whole interpretation is ruled by a judgment of the value of sexual freedom, compared to which the value of the family is subordinate. The English have some difficulty in defining civilisation and in distinguishing it from culture. The Germans use "Culture" as a general term for a whole way of life, with its various elements of religious, social and industrial order. They use "High Culture" for the higher reaches of human development. We use "civilisation" sometimes in this latter sense, but sometimes in the sense of those metrical, mechanical and economic advances which have so brilliantly distinguished our era and, according to some critics, have so successfully extinguished

the light of higher values whether intellectual or æsthetic or moral. In the New Morality, "civilisation" seems to mean the development of science and art, but its most relevant function is to clear away traditions which interfere with sexual freedom. In this respect it appears as a steady process of devolution, quite different from the nineteenth century idea of a steady progress of evolution. Sometimes we are given the impression that civilisation is a kind of monstrous incarnation of the spirit that denies, a dark providence leading mankind towards a social order in which all human affairs, even the production of children, will be dominated by a science which knows nothing of value or purpose.²

The part that is played by judgments of value in any historical estimate of civilisation may be illustrated by a reference to the Greeks. Here we find that culture or civilisation is identified by the New Morality with emancipation from tribal prejudice.³ The Greeks, being seafarers, met other customs than their own, and thus were more free from "slavery to the family" than their contemporaries. But a quite different account is given by those who value the family more than sexual freedom.

The Greek culture or civilisation produced a wonderful achievement in art and science. But in the most fundamental arts of social life it was a disastrous failure. For neither could the city-state

THE NEW MORALITY

rise above itself to join with other communities in seeking a politics of peace and order; nor could the gifted individual so far forget himself as to foster and develop family-life. "The Greeks," says Dr. McIver in his book on *Community* (p. 42), "tended to find their whole fulfilment in the life of the polis, which was both city and state, and in consequence the family-association remained unhonoured, unliberated, and unfulfilled, to the irretrievable loss of Greece."

In the New Morality the whole story of civilisation and the family is interpreted by the same clue. "All civilised modern societies are based on the patriarchal family,"⁴ and the "whole conception of female virtue" was invented to support an institution framed in the interests of the acquisitive male. But civilisation, once established, turned round to attack its own basis. Thus began a process of dissolution of the family which was to last for many centuries, indeed for some thousands of years. The change occurred after the quite early stage of pastoral and agricultural society.⁵ Thenceforward the chief task of civilisation was to undermine paternal power, the chief impediment in the way of sexual freedom for women. The point is stated in a sweeping generalisation: "the history of civilisation is mainly a record of the gradual decay of paternal power."⁶ It is true that the work of dissolution went on very slowly. But we are assured that the family was "never very suitable either to

urban populations or to seafaring people.”⁷ There is, however, one bright splash of colour on the historical picture. In Rome “as civilisation advanced,” birth control, freedom of divorce and the emancipation of women prevailed and the family declined. But this civilisation, though “very much like our own day,” was “confined to the upper classes, and shocked those who were not rich enough to profit by it.” Unfortunately it “succumbed to a great uprush of superstition from below”;⁸ and it is only in quite modern times that “women have regained the degree of freedom which they enjoyed in the Roman Empire.”⁹

Once more we may note the influence of judgments of value on the work of different historians. Whereas the New Morality salutes the ladies of the early Roman Empire as precursors of modern feminism and early practitioners of sexual freedom, they are elsewhere* described by the historian as unlovely women, all unattractive and some repulsive, intriguers, poisoners, adultresses, the destroyers of the Roman home, who taught everyone with whom they came into contact to live for themselves alone, and were ready to crucify their slaves for a whim. The only happy feature of their society was the “promise of extinction” which their selfishness contained. Birth-control had destroyed by the time of Hadrian all but one of the great houses

* Mr. Last in *The Legacy of Rome*, p. 209 f.

THE NEW MORALITY

of Cicero's day. Against all this "Christianity rightly and inevitably reacted."

There seems to be little doubt that the social classes who enjoyed this luxurious type of "civilisation" fulfilled the promise of extinction. They died out, and the fading of this false dawn of sexual freedom was not due simply and solely to an uprush of superstition from below. We have already seen* that the advocates of the New Morality shrewdly suspect that the full day of sexual freedom, for which they are working, will fade out in just the same way; unless indeed the State steps in and boldly organises the propagation of the civilised races. The New Morality seems to create biological parasites who do not reproduce their kind. Others will inherit the land.

In regard to our own contemporary stage of the historical process of civilisation, we need only remind ourselves that already women often turn in "horror" from the thought of home.¹⁰ The family is "decaying fast." The world is moving "forward."¹¹ The "advance of civilisation" which emerged in the early Roman Empire, and was "very much like that of our own day," is once more resumed. It is already diminishing paternal and maternal feeling, sapping the vitality of the instincts by which the family has been supported. The forces of civilisation are hostile to monogamy and especially to the

* p. 56 above.

HISTORY

institution of fatherhood. It seems probable that the operation of economic forces may lead to the elimination, to a great extent, of free motherhood also. But we must leave to a later chapter the forecast that is inspired by this philosophy of civilisation and the proposals by which a civilised state may promote sexual freedom and yet evade the promise of extinction. Its hope of survival will be seen to rest not on the maternal but on the acquisitive instinct of women.

References to *Marriage and Morals* .

¹ p. 213.

² p. 211.

³ p. 138.

⁴ p. 19.

⁵ p. 137.

⁶ p. 27.

⁷ p. 138.

⁸ pp. 29-30.

⁹ p. 52.

¹⁰ p. 169.

¹¹ p. 75.

CHAPTER IX

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

ACCORDING to the New Morality, there is much to be said for the view that the average man in all ages has had as many children as it paid him to have, no more and no less.* The propagation of the race has been dependent on the economic interest of the male. The family was established to serve this economic interest. When civilisation has done its work and the family is finally dissolved, the propagation of the race will, we are told, probably become dependent on the economic interest of the female† who will have to be paid to bear children. Compared to the acquisitive instinct, only a secondary degree of power and importance is attributed to the parental instinct.

The high morality of sex, however, would claim that this is contrary to human nature. It would allow that greed and lust have had a great power in the history of sex, but not that this was according to any indwelling purpose either of Nature or of Civilisation; rather that it was a degeneration. The high morality would urge that the essential purpose of human life tends

* *Marriage and Morals*, p. 141.

† See p. 264-5 below.

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

towards a development of the family sentiment, and above all a development and expansion of the parental instinct and of parental care.

There is, I suppose, no new element of thought which has exercised during our lifetime so powerful an influence on thought as the conception of biological evolution. It has brought freshness into many studies of nature and humanity; and it has strengthened our belief in an upward tendency in all life, akin to that which we know in ourselves as purpose. Psychology, which fifty years ago was almost entirely a study of cognition, has now become, above all, a study of conation. Not so much how we know, as how we strive for our ends, such is now the enquiry of psychology. Life is a striving after ends and purposes; new and higher purposes make their appearance in its age-long history. Thus we are led to believe that even in the lowest forms of animal life there are elements which link up with forms of the highest human development. The modern theory of Creative Evolution treats what is new in development as being really new, but not discontinuous with what was there before. Thus some well-known Evolutionists seek in rudimentary life for germs of the highest fulfilment.

For us laymen of science, members so to speak of the common jury, these judgments have both interest and encouragement. They suggest that in the vast ocean of life there is evidence of an

THE NEW MORALITY

element akin to increasing purpose. It seems possible that among all the dysteleologies, all the abortive experiments, all the waste in the history of life, there is a line of ascent from the lowest to the highest. There are, at any rate, some leading biologists* who allow us to interpret the whole story of Evolution in terms of an increasing purpose, or at least of an indwelling upward tendency, in the pre-human history of life, a tendency in the direction of Intelligence and Co-operation.

The vastness of the universal sea of life, in which this tendency seems to move and have its being, may be surmised from the following description. There are 25,000 *known* species of vertebrate animals and 250,000† *known* species of invertebrate animals, to say nothing of plants. Most of these species contain an incalculable number of individuals, and each of these individuals contains a number of living cells that runs up to millions in the higher animals, and each of these cells may have some relative independence and difference of its own.

To compute the total number of living beings upon the earth and in the air and the sea would be a harder task than to compute the number of the stars. It would need a more than "astronomical" calculus. And the ocean of living beings,

* e.g., Sir Arthur Thomson. See his *System of Animate Life*. See also *Science and Religion* (Howe, 3s. 6d.), a symposium of scientists and theologians.

† One authority tells me "more probably 500,000."

while no less awe-inspiring in multitude, is far more lovely in its groupings and more significant in its operations than Kant's firmament of stars. It is suggested that the incomprehensible depths of this magic sea are lit, darkly here, more brightly there, by a glow of living tendency. Ages ago men sought to read purpose in the stars, and were bewitched by vain thoughts of ineluctable fate. To-day, with better reason, we seek to trace purpose in the history of Life, and it strengthens us when we seem to discern it; to find the analogue of aspiration deep in the bosom of great Nature; and to think that, before man was, she gave a home to the seed of his ideals.

The perspective of Life brings before the mind a thought of absolute wonder. It is wonderful as viewed in the present; more wonderful when seen as the outcome of ages of evolution; not least wonderful when we think of *the mystery of parental instinct*, emerging in the process of evolution, but having roots far back, how far no one can guess, in distant æons of the past. High up in the development, among the later animals, there comes the emergence of the Family. After long ages of evolution, life rises to the height of the parental instinct: an indwelling force driving animals to *devotion*. They devote themselves to their offspring as if they were moved by a great and noble inspiration and purpose. It is only this devotion, carried out with a loyalty caring little

THE NEW MORALITY

for hardship or death, which makes it possible for the higher species of animals to survive: for their young have a long infancy. It is a devotion sustained by no conscious reason or purpose. But it *seems* as though it were inspired by them, and it holds seeds of a flowering of reason and purpose more beautiful and more powerful for good than anything else on earth. We who have lived through the last half century have seen how this instinct in women, liberated and sublimated, has expanded in a movement for good such as the world has hardly known before. Far back and deep in the history and nature of life lay the germs of this power of giving and caring. We are loath to believe it will be lost because a little storm has ruffled the air with the fever, the fume and the fret of an untoward generation.

It seems, therefore, as though the new biological perspective is not without suggestion for our discussion of the value of the Family. Great thinkers have exalted this value ever since thought began; the Family has ranked in their philosophy as the primitive and essential cell of social life; and they have said, so to speak, "There is a blessing in it," a deep-rooted natural purpose of good. But at no earlier period had they the evidence of Biology to shew how deeply the Family is rooted in Nature and in the whole development of life.

It is one of the more unfortunate by-products

of an age of reason that some minds become so infatuated with the successes of rational analysis that they have no sense of mystery left in them. For several centuries reason has been largely occupied with analysis, with separating out the various elements which were joined together in the synthesis of mediæval civilisation and with vindicating for each of these elements a relative independence of its own. This needful and highly salutary process of reason has gone on side by side with a process of physical and psychological study occupied likewise with the work of analysis. The misfortune has been that all these processes have been too much influenced by the ideals of mechanics. Separate out your elements, your parts, your atoms, and you have found truth. Synthesis is just a re-arrangement of parts.

It is only of late, and largely owing to the rise of Biology, that the civilised mind has come to see the falsehood of such a description of the reality of things; and to turn again to the mysterious character of unity as exemplified in the living organism and in the living society. So men come to speculate once again whether there be not a purpose in Life, greater than any one person, or any one group, or any one generation—a purpose never wholly comprehensible even by the highest reason, a purpose which may be rather divined than conceived—for though it is partly to be traced in the history of the past, its further potentialities, felt to be big with

THE NEW MORALITY

promise, can only be gradually revealed by the future.

Any higher kind of philosophy seeks to penetrate as far as possible into the unity of things. It takes, for example, the unity of the family, a natural institution of humanity, and seeks to shew how its biological character may be maintained and at the same time may be developed into an ethical character of the highest beauty and value. All philosophy is bound to take into account the facts of scientific investigation, but it is bound also to go beyond the facts if it seriously pursues the unities of things. It is bound to look for *development from within life* and to divine its tendency. In the last resort all high philosophy is divination of purpose : or at least of a directive tendency in life, akin to that which conscious life knows within itself as purpose.

It is proper, therefore, for students of the family to meditate upon its natural unity of purpose, and to discern how, rising from within the biology of reproduction, of associated life, of getting food, of warding off enemies, of elementary training of the young, there appears, and there *may* appear in the highest degree, a new growth of ethical value, a new creative evolution of social sentiment, a real and natural revelation of the mystery of Life's purpose.

On the contrary, a mechanically minded philosophy, which takes no interest in the mystery of natural purpose, is exhausted by the surgical

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

separation of parts—you can quite easily separate the normal exercise of sex from the exercise of parental care, the reproduction of the race from its natural context of fatherhood, motherhood, sonship, brotherhood. The bits can somehow be preserved in their respective autonomies, and be put together by the State. The State can rearrange the parts, working through its Procreation Office and Education Office. To all of which there is only one reply that can be made—

Er hält die Teile in seiner Hand
Fehlt leider nur das geistige Band.

Let us now turn aside for a while from the New Morality and consider the great primary datum which Nature herself recommends as the beginning of any discussion of sex and the family. It is the fact of parental care as existing already in the animals that are nearest to man and as being the highest product of the age-long story of biological evolution. If we, who are not experts, allow our imagination a modest freedom of play, we need not incur the charge of foolishness; for all attempts to see into the value and purpose of things make a call on the imagination. It is reasonable to hope that we may find warrant enough for seeing in the primitive family not only a fundamental purpose of biology but also a deep-lying system of impulses and tendencies, which is the seed-plot of social growth.

It is a genuine mystery of indwelling purpose,

THE NEW MORALITY

how the ethical rises naturally from within the biological, and how the complex sentiment of family becomes cultivated and enlarged so that it can extend beyond itself and pervade for good the widest activities of historical life. Regarded in this light, the datum of parental care and the associated data of the fraternal and filial impulses may be viewed as a fact *already given* in the pre-human stage of our history, and even at that stage offering to the reasonable imagination suggestions of ethical value.

The higher the stage of animal development the longer and more helpless becomes the infancy of the young. Their long infancy leads to the growth of several notable factors of family life. It means a longer education of the young in order to prepare them for the more complicated life of the higher animals ; and this longer education brings not only a longer, but also a closer, connection between parents and young. It brings also a far closer connection between the co-operating parents, which may develop more and more as brood succeeds or even overlaps brood. This co-operative care of parents towards the young rises still higher at the advent of man ; so, too, the response which binds the child to the parents. Father, mother and child have a felt relation of belonging to each other, and this belonging directly depends on the instinctive grace of giving and caring in the parents. There is a common end or purpose. Primitive men and

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

women may not be fully conscious of the meaning of this purpose, but it inspires them to co-operate. There is a differentiation of function and of contribution to the common end. There is a natural and mutual trust between the parents for the performance of their respective functions. There is a sharing of work and the fruits of work. Each is to give what he can and get what he needs. The consciousness of belonging to each other and of facing together all the variety of life, with its needs and perils, with its prosperity and adversity, is accompanied by an emotion of reciprocal affection.

It is, therefore, not merely fanciful to see in this original social partnership, as Aristotle saw, the radical type of all human society. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a whole succession of moral philosophers were bent on finding or explaining the essential bond of human community. How could the mere ego be made to realise that he ought to pass beyond his own interests to serve the interests of others? What is the nature and cogency of fellow-feeling? Is sympathy with suffering no more than dislike of suffering because it might just as well have fallen on *me*; no more than an "extension of egoistic feeling"? Or, on the other hand, is it something direct, intuitive, immediate, underived, as natural as eating and drinking?

The evidence of Biology and Anthropology seems now to be clear. All the time that wise

THE NEW MORALITY

men were discussing these problems, Nature had been gently suggesting, as she had suggested from the earliest origin of the family, that fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, belong to each other; that the expansion of this sentiment of belonging was the royal road to far wider unities than that of the family and that the mere independent ego was a ridiculous abstraction.

It is this *consciousness of reciprocal belonging* which appears to be the original and underived element of all social psychology. Whatever may be our view of the transition from the animal to the human family, whatever we may think of the relation of instinct to intelligence, I do not imagine that anyone really doubts that this awareness of reciprocal belonging, with all its possibilities for good, was operative in the family ages before the emergence of reason in the animate creation. It is for the expert psychologist to specify the nature and degree of this awareness of belonging in animals or men. Of the fact there can be little doubt, for without such awareness and its active and emotive expression in *reciprocal giving and caring* the human race could never have survived.

These two elements of "care"—(a) taking care of another, fostering, helping, *active care*; and (b) caring for another by way of affection, *emotive care*—seem to be two distinguishable, but inseparable, aspects of parental instinct. All

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

“ideas” or rational explanations of kinship, and all “rules” or disciplinary ordering of social relationships, are later and secondary explications of an original felt and active unity of common life.

Of the first beginnings of reason we know no more than of the first beginnings of religion in the race; but it seems clear that religion was always an awareness of the community of social life with some higher life in the Unseen; and many of the early tentatives of reason were guided by this sense of religious communion, with results that to the modern mind are often very strange and bewildering.

Thus the two ruling elements of primitive social and religious psychology appear to have been the awareness of human community, above all of family community; and the awareness of community with a life more and other and higher than human life. When reason got to work on the mystery of kinship it produced an astonishing variety of explanatory ideas and customs; and when it got to work on the mystery of religion it brought galaxies of gods and spirits and fetishes and taboos and savage demons which no anthropologist can number or reduce to intelligible order. The work of reason was often wild enough; and it took a long time before its underlying tendency to unity brought men firmly to grasp the idea that there is *one* higher life in the regions above man and

THE NEW MORALITY

one natural form of kinship, based upon the monogamous family, whether it be traced through father or mother or, as we trace it to-day, through both.

But all the time, amid whatever aberrations of adjustment and whatever complications of clan relationship, the pressure of biological inheritance and pre-rational instinct was working steadily in favour of the monogamous family. This, I understand, is the present hypothesis of some eminent scholars who seek to combine the available evidence of Biology and of Anthropology. If, then, this be at all a fair construction of the evidence, our choice of parental care as the primary social datum is not out of harmony with the present phase of science.

But parental care of the young follows the process of sexual mating, and Nature has joined sex and parenthood together. When the higher animals mate we may fairly presume a stabilisation of their psychology and a new beginning of life in both the mates. Something has been achieved and settled for them. After mutual attraction and courtship, there follows a union of lives, in which the life of each is fundamentally changed. Before the birth of the young there is a new element of expectation, a forward outlook, as in birds when they share in the work of building the nest. The relation of sex is more and more shot through with awareness of reciprocal belonging and with mutual care.

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

The very nature of sex implies elementary care, both emotive and active, caring for each other and taking care of one another. It would be a libel on these animals to suppose their sexual life to be devoid of this belonging and this natural and mutual care.

When the young are born, all these "moral" elements of reciprocal belonging, of emotive and active care, are immeasurably reinforced by the busy preoccupation of the mates with the needs of their offspring and by that strongest of all natural and social bonds, co-operation in the service of others. As we noted above, this instinctive grace of the animal parent is a *devotion*, which offers all the appearance of being inspired by conscious reason and purpose. No one imagines the animal mating and breeding to be moved by a clear consciousness of biological purpose; but it is carried out by the mates with a loyal devotion of co-operation and mutual care which has given to humanity its noblest image of love.

If there be any truth in these considerations, it would seem that a unique social quality issues from this complication of the sexual and parental instincts. The sexual impulse takes to itself a finer quality, by which it desires to foster the life of the mate. In the higher culture of sex-life this desire becomes an enduring loyalty of generous care, a steady set of the will to take care of the beloved and to aid her or him in the

THE NEW MORALITY

development of life. Even in marriages which are by no means ideally happy, there is often exhibited in a surprising way the strength of this impulse to shield and take care of a partner. Lacking this element of fostering care, not even the most delightful and enthralling romantic emotions have a pennyworth of moral value. It is a mistake to use the word Love for any sexual relationship which renounces the element of enduring devotion and loyalty.

It remains, and will always remain, entirely natural that a girl should hope to meet a man who will care for her personality with enduring affection and aid her true development; that she should hope also to care for him and to take care of him, as he of her: and should regard such a relationship as that of true love, for in it the whole complex of sexual instinct, imagination and desire is transformed to a higher quality by the infusion of creative loyalty. After all there is nothing in this which is foreign to what we know of primitive man. It is no more than the awareness of reciprocal belonging and the impulse of mutual care which were already there in the animal family, and were already established in human action and emotion before reason woke up and discovered them.

When one lover asks the other "Do you really care for me?" it is a simple and natural question which loses all its dignity unless the word "care" implies something more than sexual or romantic

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

emotion and something at least of an intention to foster the whole personality and whole life-career of the beloved, some real attachment and devotion of life to life. So it seems entirely natural that the language of lovers towards each other should borrow the endearments which parents use towards their children, and that the parental instinct should be stirred into playful life by the happiness of courtship. We have heard, and heard too much, of the crossing of the filial instinct with the instinct of sex. How is it that from the expositors of "modern love" we never hear of the crossing of the sex impulse with the impulse of parental care, so that lovers desire to take care of and foster the life of the beloved? I remember dimly a fine French story of a woman who did not love her husband, but, as she bent over the cradle of their child, she caught his likeness to the father and found a chamber in her breast unlocked whence came forth love towards her husband. Thus the impulse of the mother woke the impulse of the lover in her heart. There are a thousand mysteries of love which lie beyond the ken of the psycho-analyst, for he studies the phenomena not of health but of disease. Healthy people give a wide berth to his consultation-room; just as the whole mass of happy family-life in this country lies securely hidden from the cold logic of sexual freedom.

THE NEW MORALITY

The instincts or impulses of the lover and the parent lie close together in the human soul. Their blending appears even in the days of courtship. It grows firmer when actual parenthood follows, bringing forth fruit of generous care in all its fulness, care towards the child heightening care towards each other, a care in both cases involving interest in the development of life. Any effort to dissolve this natural and gracious involution of sexual love with parental love does violence to nature by cutting out from the heart of sex the element of permanent devotion to the welfare and personality of the beloved.

But beyond the impulses of care which thus join together two individuals, like and yet unlike, in the closest of all personal unions, there is a further impulse which belongs to any morality that deserves its name. This is the principle of trust. The primitive parents, male and female, have differences of function. They are united by a reciprocal belonging, by a mutual care and by a co-operation in all the tasks of family life: the care of the young, the provision of food, the securing of shelter and defence. From this active and living union rises naturally the spirit of trust. The parents do not and cannot stand over each other at their daily and hourly tasks. They trust each other.

There emerges the *consciousness of being trusted*,

perhaps the deepest and strongest element of social character. Just as, in the old story, Abraham had trust and it was counted to him for the highest of all virtue, so, too, he had the consciousness of being trusted and of meaning to be loyal to his charge, a virtue not less than the highest. All this, said the Apostle, was long before the coming of Law. No one, indeed, can claim to know much of the psychology of primitive man, and no doubt we are bound to draw upon our imagination when we try to think about his mind. But it is known that Custom reigned for ages before the advent of Law, and it may reasonably be submitted that the essence of custom is unconscious and habitual trusting, and being trusted, in those who are members one of another. The great thought of conscious honour may in its fullness be late to develop. But the principle is at home in all spontaneous social life. It means that when I am trusted by those who belong to me, and to whom I belong in a common life of reciprocal belonging, I *cannot* be untrue to my trust.

May I beg the reader to pause upon this? It is a morality far deeper than any legality. It contains a sanction far more powerful than any promise of reward or punishment. In the last analysis no legal system could survive for a year without it; for laws are made to coerce those who will not or cannot rise to the sense of honour and to the spirit of community. Without

THE NEW MORALITY

trust, neither community nor law could do more than fall to pieces from within.

Every good teacher acts on this principle. Many young people respond. One dear friend of mine, vastly popular with men and women, told me that in passing through fiery temptations nothing could have kept him from giving in, save the knowledge that his mother trusted him. So, too, the subaltern, horribly afraid of the shells, found fear of death came within control when he was put in charge of a platoon and knew the men trusted their leader as a man of honour. The deepest source of moral power was liberated within him in response to the challenge of honour. The consciousness of bearing a commission of trust called up within him moral resources which he never knew he had.

Thus the consciousness of being trusted quickens the most powerful resources of human personality. It touches a spring of self-control and of self-giving which lies deeper in the soul than any love of pleasure or any fear of pain. The appeal of honour touches the core of any true manhood or womanhood. Ideas and rational explanations of duty, rules and regulations, rewards and punishments, may pass through a thousand varieties of change and transformation, but the one profound and sustaining source of social duty is the spirit of men and women who are conscious of membership in a community of reciprocal belonging, a community of bodily or

THE PARENTAL IMPULSE

spiritual kin, a community of mutual trust and honour.

This principle of honour and trust was well known to the ancients. The good faith which restores a deposit when there is no legal compulsion was often celebrated by the Greeks.* The motto *pactum serva* has won praise for thousands of years. Even at this moment we hear of a movement among international lawyers to restore the prestige of this motto and to re-establish the faith that nations are bound to each other not only by treaties and sanctions, but also by links of trust and honour as members one of another. If this were so, "national honour" would become an obligation to consider the interests of other nations instead of an obligation to insist solely on your own; which may remind us of a saying of Thomas Carlyle, to the effect that high breeding gives rise to a delicate insistence on your own privileges, but good breeding to a delicate insistence on the privileges of others.

Thus, from a principle which made its first and most natural home in the family, a great influence has been spreading abroad to the life

* In Dr. A. E. Taylor's new book, *The Faith of a Moralist*, I find (I.177): "The poisoned arrow appears to horrify the Homeric Achæan as much as poison gas horrified us when it made its first appearance." Alas, for the modern sense of honour! Well, some of us Christians are prepared to make it a point of the wider honour, a point of response to the wider trust, that we should join to oppose any approach of our country to war without a previous offer of recourse to arbitration. Is it not fair to suggest to international associations of scientists that they should follow suit? That would be a very powerful position to adopt, for no country dare make war without the scientists.

THE NEW MORALITY

of neighbourhood and to ever-widening circles of social life. Commerce would crumble without it. As a coal-merchant said in my boyhood hearing, "The basis of business is trust."

We have no record of primitive family or society, but the fruits of trusting and being trusted seem native to that community of reciprocal belonging in which we have sought to find the secret of primitive life and, indeed, of the survival of the race. Where there is elementary spontaneous trust, there comes forth, in response to the challenge of trust, the gladness of being trusted and the moral power of loyalty and honour. Certainly, as soon as early society reached the stage of having chiefs, the call of the chief was heard by the tribesman with unhesitating obedience, as though it were the call of his own true and highest self. Both chiefs and kings may have traded on this loyalty for vile purposes. Subjects, partisans, disciples may have been foolish in allegiance to bad men, and to honour have been falsely true. But so it is, has been and will be with all that is best in human character and society.

But make your cultivated idea of honour as high and broad and deep as you like, you can hardly deny that the seeds of this fruitage lay in the heart of primitive humanity. All the world knows how the trust of a child summons forth the instinctive response of parental honour. It is not perhaps so widely recognised that this

trust and response are as natural to sex. For, in spite of some modern psychology, sex is not naked *libido*. It bears within it nobler elements, elements of care, elements of natural trust and honour. When involved with the instinct of parenthood, the instinct of sex is suffused with personal trust. As personality has grown and developed in the history of culture, what happens to the body has gone deeper and deeper into the mind. Nowadays the champions of decadence write books in order to reduce the finer aspects of sex-life to zero. But unless it is enfeebled by corruption, sex has a natural binding power (*sexus nexus*). Its urge towards a reciprocal belonging of life to life, its deep and subtle influence over the inmost personality, its impulse of trust towards the beloved, its appeal for an honourable response to trust, has the power to move even the toughest hearts. On the other hand, it is just because a woman tends to expect care for her life and welfare, tends to trust the man she loves, that men to whom honour is strange have found their prey so easy.

CHAPTER X

THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES

TWENTY years ago a book* was written by Dr. McDougall which came to many of us as a landmark in our reading. It seemed to give an effective quietus to the hedonism by which all human motives were traced to the desire for pleasure and the aversion from pain; by which also pleasure and happiness were regarded as one and the same thing. On the basis of this hedonism it was hopeless to give an ethical account of the social bond.

The attempt to build an ethic on a hedonistic psychology ran much as follows: There is a force in human life which is called moral obligation, the "ought." It is agreed that men *ought* to seek the good of others. But psychology has shewn that humanity is affected by no other motive than the desire for pleasure and the avoidance of pain. Therefore all we have to do for a moral theory is to shew that the desire of the individual for pleasure leads to general happiness.

Thus was created an ethic which, in effect, dispensed altogether with the "ought"; for

* *Social Psychology*. (Methuen).

THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES

if you *can* be moved to act only by the motive of private pleasure, then the sense of moral obligation means nothing more than that *you ought to do what you cannot help doing* unless you cease to do anything at all. If the desire for pleasure came into conflict with the happiness of others, there was no principle of morals which could provide a solution of the conflict.

This clumsy and abortive attempt at moral theory received a hard blow from Dr. McDougall. He shewed that the moving forces of human life were not to be reduced to self-interest, however enlightened; but were to be sought, in the first instance, in the powerful engines of biological instinct. Above all, the maternal instinct had a depth and power far beyond the reach of any merely hedonistic explanation. The *tender protective emotion* of mother towards infant, the instinctive source of endless toil and sacrifice, was the root of all generous goodness. The emotion was caught by the father through infection from the mother, and it spread abroad to relationships far wider than the family, being the source of nearly all that human history has been able to offer of what is, without qualification, *good*. This instinctive force appeared to have developed and expanded from early unconscious or dimly conscious stages until it had become the luminous guide and the vital warmth of the noblest and most intelligent

humanity. Thus arose, for example, the wave of humanitarian energy which distinguished the nineteenth century above all other centuries in history.

Discussion still rages over the definition of "instinct." McDougall may or may not be right in his famous account of it as a complex of awareness, emotion and striving toward an end. But twenty years have done little to modify the value of his summary :*

The parental instinct is the foundation of the family and the stability of the family is the prime condition of healthy state of society. We have no certain record of a community in which the family in one form or another does not exist. Among all peoples, save the very lowest, marriage and parenthood are surrounded by the most solemn social sanctions, embodied in custom, law and religion. The co-existence of the reproductive and parental instincts in both sexes suffices to determine the family, and the parental instinct is commonly directed to the partner as well as to the child.

By his just emphasis on instinct McDougall made the old social psychology look ridiculous. It would be a libel even on a dog or a cat to account for their life and nature by the sole consideration of the love of pleasure and the avoidance of pain. If there had been nothing more than this hedonism in the stuff of human nature, there could never have been any human society at all, or indeed any human race.

But this emphasis on one instinct within the family could not fail to raise in the reader

* *Social Psychology* (1908), pp. 268-9.

mind a question of further interest. If a parental instinct, why not also a fraternal and a filial instinct? Or, to avoid embarrassment with the technical problem of "instinct," why not a fraternal and a filial *impulse*? Is it contrary to the evidence to assume a natural "brother" and "son" variation within the family sentiment of reciprocal belonging, each of them with a specific differentiation of trust and care? May it not be supposed that the natural quality of brotherly feeling deserves recognition in the psychology of the group?

Ever since Galton, in 1851, observed the South African oxen displaying no affection for their fellows, but distressed if separated from them and only satisfied when they were huddled together, a good deal of anthropology passed into the "gregarious" phase. The "herd-instinct" was used for all it was worth, and especially by those who were disposed to imagine promiscuity as the primitive method of the exercise of sex. But this gregarious phase of anthropology is not so dominant to-day. For example, Dr. Elliot Smith* can write: "The evidence we have been collecting reveals no trace of the assembling of any 'herd' other than the family group," any herd, that is, "in the sense of the speculative psychologists and sociologists."

To-day there is more inclination to look to

* *Human History*. See also Marett on p. 80 above.

the family rather than to the herd for the impulses which keep society together. The "huddling" instinct may be natural enough for wild oxen, and no doubt plays a part in human society. But it does not seem nearly so important in man as the family instinct. Moreover, this latter "instinct," or rather complex organism of natural impulses, includes, *in the fraternal impulse*, a principle which only needs expansion in force, and extension in range, in order to explain very naturally the way in which men associate in groups.

According to Galton, the Damaraland oxen displayed no affection for their fellows, but only the instinctive sense of a need of keeping together, and a satisfaction at finding themselves surrounded by a group that shared their emotion. In the family also there is this sense of need to keep together, but it is enriched by other factors. The awareness of reciprocal belonging expresses itself in emotive and active care of one another. The impulse of brotherhood draws strength from the family group of which it is a part. It is a member of an organism of sentiment, and as a member it shares in the strength of the whole body. No doubt the fraternal impulse is subject to great variations both in power and in duration, but it seems to be a more natural and fruitful, and certainly a more human, root than any herd-instinct for the feelings and obligations required in the wider world of social life.

THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES

But if a fraternal, why not also a filial impulse, with roots in the psycho-physical organisation of human nature? It is a hypothesis which would make the task of explaining the facts of gratitude and of religion much easier than it has sometimes been found by the social psychologist. I have read that the tender emotion of child towards parent is due to a sympathetic induction of the parent's tender emotion towards the child. But the parental emotion is by definition "protective"! Such a statement seems to argue an unreadiness to recognise a *connatural reciprocity* of feeling, protective on the one part and trustful on the other. Surely there is a difference between the grace of giving in the parent and the grace of response in the child; and each has its own organic basis. Is it not better to assume such a primary basis for filial trust and gratitude rather than to represent these "tender emotions" as a result of a secondary "induction"? Moreover when we consider religion, it seems no less difficult to account for religious trust and gratitude by an induction from the creative goodness of Providence. Such gratitude would rise from a natural root in psychology, if we were allowed to use the hypothesis of a filial impulse, a *quality of filial response* within the more general "tender emotion."

It is hazardous and almost reckless for one who is not a trained psychologist to do much

more than ask questions on these great matters. But the plea that such questions may rightly be asked receives some warrant from new studies of primitive man. We have already noted that the most primitive peoples hitherto studied by anthropology shew a remarkable uniformity in their sentiment of family and in their filial attitude towards the higher Power after whom they conceive all fatherhood to be named. If this may be taken as a sign that human psychology includes a distinct element of filial quality, it is a sign which receives confirmation from some very modern psychological enquiries.

Dr. Freud believes that the strains and tensions which now exist in human nature, owing to the lack of adaptation between human nature and modern civilisation, may be relieved by psychoanalysis. There is no longer any help in religion. In regard to the needs which give rise to religion, I have noted a curious parallel between the views of Freud and those of Trotsky. In an essay by Trotsky we may read that the peasant is troubled by two fears which make him seek help from religion. There is the fear of social insecurity and the fear of agricultural insecurity. To allay these fears he cries to his gods. But there is a more excellent way than religion. Communism will save him from the social fear, and the introduction of electricity into villages and farms will produce comfort

THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES

and plenty, thus saving him from the agricultural fear. To the same effect, but from another point of view, Freud has written of nature and society as the two forces which oppose the human will, two sources of uneasiness if not of fear. Accordingly, as a desperate expedient, men invent an ally, a Father-god who will be a refuge for the wounded soul and may help the individual to get satisfaction for his desires. But, Freud considers, these fears and tensions of the soul need for their resolution no such hypothetical ally. They can be resolved by rational analysis. While Trotsky proposes to substitute Father-state for Father-god, Freud prefers Father-science. But it is a matter of great interest that the Freudian analysis testifies honestly, even though it may be quite against the sympathy of its author, that, deep in the human mind, there lies this filial impulse: an impulse which is directed by a definite idea about Reality. Deep analysis discovers the tendency to believe in a Reality, transcending both the physical and social worlds, and to trust in it as though this Reality had an interest in human purposes and as though it included an element akin to what we know as parental care.

Neither Trotsky nor Freud* are conscious of the existence of any religion which provokes the will to seek justice and mercy and truth. Is it possible that in both Moscow and Vienna

* But see below, p. 159.

THE NEW MORALITY

there is no other use for religion than as an expression of individual needs and desires ; no use as a spur to the development of higher life ?

However defective may be Freud's conception of religion, this one point is worth our attention. In his pathological study of the mind he has found a disposition to turn towards a Power above human life as though it were friendly, and, indeed, as though it were of a nature analogous to parental care. It is an observation which accords with the very ancient and widespread belief we have noted as a mark of primitive religion. If indeed science were able to cut the connection between value and reality, the belief might be weakened. Or if, as has been suggested by the New Morality, civilisation were able to weed out the parental impulse from the human heart, the belief might be destroyed and the old thought of parental care would be left with no earthly or heavenly meaning. But, as humanity is at present constituted, the belief bears witness to filial trust as a real element in the psychology of mankind.

The importance of the filial relationship has not escaped the notice of modern philosophers. I owe to the late Dr. Theodore Merz, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the observation that all knowledge in the infant, and even its own self-knowledge, is mediated and in a sense created by the personality of others. More especially the

THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES

whole outer world is revealed to the infant mind in and through recognition of its mother. This observation, wrote Dr. Merz, had deeply impressed three great men just about the same time (in the nineties). None of them, he believed, had at that time any knowledge of the others—the German Dilthey, the French Gabriel Tarde and the Oxford Professor William Wallace.*

Let me give the words of Wallace :

“The mother, already enriched with reason and love, bending over her infant, does not by her glance, her smile, her touch, give it a soul, a spirit, a reason ; and yet in that glance, that smile, that touch, soul, spirit, reason are as surely born as the physiological life of the same child is born, and so far as we know is only born, in the congress of male and female. . . . The child and its mother severally bring to their union of soul a store of powers and faculties prepared by, it may be, centuries of inherited tradition. Yet it is in the main true, that it is the mother’s and father’s look and touch . . . which kindles into flame the dull materials of humanity, and begins that second birth, that spiritual parentship, which, at least not less than the first, should be the peculiar glory of human fatherhood and motherhood.”

If, however, there be this vital and altogether unique and creative relation between mother and child, is it not proper to suppose that the mind of the child *responds* with trustful dependence to the hourly ministration of the higher and, as it were, enveloping personality of the mother : such trust increasing in expression

* Merz, *Religion and Science*, p. 37. Dilthey’s words are : “Der erste objective Zusammenhang eines Ganzen, der uns aufgeht, ist der einer anderen Person. Die Mutter, welche sich über die Wiege des Kindes beugt, es aufnimmt und nährt, ist ihm die erste volle Realität, welche aus dem Hintergrunde des Sinnenchaos auftaucht und lebkraftig wird.”

THE NEW MORALITY

until it gives the mother an increasing joy in being trusted, and until the reciprocity grows more and more enriched with the growth of reason and affection in the child? Is not this the true type of authority and obedience, a loving authority and a trustful obedience; and is it not on the child's part the natural root of gratitude, loyalty, reverence, religion?*

It has been my aim in these two chapters to suggest that mankind received and took over, as a result of biological evolution, a definite form of group-life which was already equipped with psycho-physical impulses and relationships—parental, fraternal, filial. When reason came, it found the family already there in emotional and active operation. The raw material of social life had been, as it were, pre-digested and pre-formed by Mother Nature, and was given to mankind as a gift that only needed the advent of reason in order to be appreciated as the vehicle of a valuable purpose. As such it seems to have been accepted by primitive man.

Very early there grew up the complex family sentiment of reciprocal belonging, and its differentiation into several varieties of care and trust; several varieties also of social order, whether of authority, of equality or of subordination. In this original, given, variety-in-unity of relationships lay social patterns which during the whole

* As Dr. Merz added (in conversation) "Just so humanity looked up into the face of Christ and found itself."

course of history have been taken up and worked out in the wider spheres of life, patterns of authority and freedom, of subordination and equality, of justice in distribution and in contribution, of co-ordinated function, of mutual care for the development of life. All these relations between persons, varying both within and without the family, as time and experience bring changes for better or for worse, have been the subject-matter of social discussion and conflict in every period of recorded history. They all lie in rudimentary form within the primitive family.

If we were dealing with the Christian Ethic of the family we should need a very long chapter to shew the significance of the family in the Christian religion. The original message of Christianity borrowed from the family all the most characteristic terms of its vocabulary. The Church was the New Family, or, as the early Christians said, the New Race, of the Spirit, in which love was to edify life and bring it to new development. The relation of the believer to the Highest was that of sonship, and here the supreme virtue was filial trust. The Highest itself was identified with Parental Care, a conception which was marvellously elevated, deepened and refined. This Care was to be caught through induction by all believers and directed to the welfare of their fellows. The company of believers was meant so to shew forth the

THE NEW MORALITY

value of brotherhood that men would wish to find the social bond in religious fraternity. Every hope for social life was to be realised by raising the sentiment of family to the spiritual plane and by extending it throughout the world.*

As one writer has said, the Family and its value are a topic for the poet. In another chapter I hope to finish this imperfect and prosaic effort to make plainer to myself and possibly to some others the meaning of the family for social purpose. Meanwhile I must record my thanks to a friend who now tells me, and

* In the writings of the New Testament we find the deepest thoughts expressed in terms of connubial and parental care. The Christ cherishes the life of his new society as a husband cherishes his wife. The sufferings of the Christ are compared to the birth-pangs before a delivery of new life which brings exceeding joy. In the earliest book of the New Testament the Apostle speaks of his gentle "nursing" of his convert-"children" whom he comforts as a "father," being ready to give his soul for them. The life-breath of the new society was a constructive devotion, the "charity" that "edifieth," i.e., the love that has a creative care for building up personal and social life. There was some trouble about terminology. Just lately I have read in the works of a great French critic how he finds himself obliged now and then to use the word *amour-dévouement* when he is speaking of love in the sense of *devotion*, in order to avoid confusion with an *amour* which is empty of permanent devotion to its object. In the same way, the Greek word for love, though used with high meaning by Plato, had been spoiled and vulgarised by its common employment as meaning mere sensual passion. So the Christians preferred another word which appears in the Latin as *Caritas*. The early Christians were not great statesmen or philosophers, nor had they any great plans of social reform: but they threw themselves with energy into the task of cleansing and elevating the heart of social life and of getting the family and their local fellowship right. Needless to add that this programme involved an integrity of character in the husband and father to match that integrity in the wife and mother which was already regarded by the nobler sort of pagans as the pillar of the home. In reference to this idea of constructive life and love, it is interesting to read M. Bergson's new philosophy of Creative Love. Twenty-five years ago, Bergson drew out the philosophical implications of biology in his *Evolution Créatrice*. Now, in his *Les Deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion* (1932) he draws out the implications of mystical experience, arguing that it contains a revelation of the inmost meaning of Life.

THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES

has quoted in a book,* Dr. Freud's new answer to the old question "What keeps society together?" or "What is the nature of the social bond?" The answer is that the "whole structure of the group" is connected with "the emotional ties which are characteristic of the family." It is family-life, then, which builds up the dispositions which make possible the life of the wider groups. The "essence of the group mind" lies in "love-relationships." Here is the explanation of the strange unconscious influence of the group upon its members. Here, too, the explanation of loyalty to the leader, for the leader becomes the object of a sentiment like that of a child towards its father. Further, as the members are bound by this strong tie to the leader, who embodies their ideal, so they are bound all the more to one another.

This discovery, that in the psychology of the family lies the clue to the social bond, is illustrated by Dr. Freud from the life of the most enduring of historical societies by an illustration which is all the more impressive because the writer does not share the faith of this society.

"All the demands that are made upon the individual are derived from this love of Christ's. A democratic character runs through the Church, for the very reason that before Christ everyone is equal, and that everyone has an equal

* *Psychology and God*, by L. W. Grensted. (Bampton Lectures, 1930.) (Longmans.) See pp. 186-8.

THE NEW MORALITY

share in His love. It is not without a deep reason that the similarity between the Christian community and a family is invoked, and that believers call themselves brothers in Christ, that is, brothers through the love which Christ has for them. There is no doubt that the tie which unites each individual with Christ is also the cause of the tie which unites them with each other.

“Every Christian loves Christ as his ideal and feels himself united with all other Christians by the tie of identification. But the Church requires more of him. He has also to identify himself with Christ and love all other Christians as Christ loved them.”

It was in accord with Aristotle, Augustine, Thomas and the whole great line of our Western tradition that Burke* wrote long ago of family love as a “sort of elemental training in those higher and more enlarged regards by which alone men can be affected as with their own concern.” It was the family, *given*, as we have urged, to mankind before the awakening of reason, which equipped the race with the fertile germs of future social development. The social philosophers of the last century paid too little attention to this mystery of Nature. They sought for other ways of explaining how the individual ever came to pass across from his own interests to a care for the interests of others. What was the mystery of the bond which held society together? Lately we have heard too often, from publicists who exploit

* Quoted in *Social Purpose* by Hetherington and Muirhead (1918), a book which helped me years ago, as did Professor Lofthouse's *Ethics and the Family*, and especially Mrs. Bosanquet's *The Family*.

THE FRATERNAL AND FILIAL IMPULSES

the "dynamic psychology of our times," that the family is the poison of social life. But there seems to be once more a turning to the old belief that the family holds the secret of social life.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

WHEN the philosopher said, more than 2,000 years ago, that man was a social or "political" animal, he implied that the art of "living well" required some kind of polity or settled system of relationships among those who lived together in one place. There were, he considered, three main systems of settled relationship—the family, the village and the city. Each of them was based on a collocation of lives, a living together in one place, a neighbourhood. Both Plato and Aristotle held that the finest development of neighbourly life was to be seen in the city-state. But they thought that if a city grew beyond a certain point of size, the cultural advantages of town life became subject to a law of diminishing returns. Beyond that point, whatever was gained in quantity brought a corresponding loss in quality.

Their insight has been justified by the degeneration of social life which is well known to be taking place in some overgrown cities of the modern world. In these cities men and women are often gathered together without any fixed relation to a settled social environment. They lack the common interests, customs, associations,

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

institutions, traditions of the normal life which grows up in family and neighbourhood. Their relationships with others, apart from those which are connected with their daily work, are apt to be casual and fleeting, and many of their circumstances encourage a life of unstable individualism. They tend to become items of a loosely organised herd. There is nothing to give moral substance to their lives and there is the danger of drift towards the lowest common measure of culture and morality, with a very faint sense of social responsibility.*

We have already noted that it is at least doubtful whether there is any "herd-instinct" in mankind; but, according to the New Morality, the advance of civilisation assimilates the sex-instinct of mankind to the instincts of the polygamous herd. There is a difference, however, from the animal herd, for in mankind "civilised" females as well as males are said to be inclined towards polygamy, and cannot be expected to retain the parental interests of the animals. The herd therefore becomes in this respect a hive, in which parental responsibilities are taken over from the family by the community; leaving the

* On January 27th, 1932, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales delivered a remarkable speech which has called attention to the value of good neighbourhood, and to the need of a fresh volume of personal service. "No country in the world," he said, "has developed its social services to the extent that we have, but this may encourage a tendency to take it all for granted and to forget the readiness to give that is the only justification for the privileges of citizenship." He asked his vast audience (the speech was broadcast) to play the part of neighbour and friend more especially to the man out of work, and said there was "no machinery that could provide a substitute for the good neighbour."

THE NEW MORALITY

individuals, both male and female, free for an exercise of sex which is devoid of every kind of social obligation.

No one can fail to see how the principles of the New Morality are closely adapted to the loose individualism of the "herd" which is now collecting in some huge cities. The herd occurs in the social history of mankind only as a product of excessive urbanism. Not that town-life in general has been opposed to the organised life of family and neighbourhood. It has been and remains the effective means of the highest and finest development of neighbourhood. But in a few cosmopolitan world-cities of antiquity, and in many such cities to-day, there have appeared the distinctive phenomena of the urban "herd," a mass of human atoms, without roots in the natural soil of family and neighbourhood, or in any settled social environment, which can embody permanent values and provide steady sustenance for the settlement and development of personality. Instability of purpose and character is the distinguishing mark of the urban herd, and its undoubted tendency to sexual instability is only one aspect of its general instability.*

As though to meet these "herd" conditions the New Morality throws into the foreground

* The fashionable device of reducing morality to terms of a current phase of psychology is an attempt to cover up this degeneration of social life. See Appendix B, where it is shown that one version of the New Morality finds it necessary to dispense altogether with the conceptions of moral personality and of social responsibility. Psychology, what follies are committed in thy name!

the element of inconstancy in sex-life, making it triumph over the element of obligation towards attachment or devotion of one life to another. The biological* and psychological need of a permanent "mating," and of a "settlement" of sex-life, is either ignored or thrown into the background. The morality of sex-relationships is assimilated to the shifting and unstable relationships of a social life which is removed both from the advantages and the obligations of an orderly social environment.

Just at the present time there are writers who find occupation in drawing lurid pictures of the coming disintegration of human society, and in particular of the institutions of parenthood and family. Having given up faith and hope they seek to destroy the faith and hope of others. They represent the forces of science, of mechanisation, of industrialism, as impersonal demons beyond all possibility of moral or social control. They are unable to understand the vocation of human culture or the duty of developing a moral and social purpose strong enough to make servants of science, mechanisation and industrialism. They consider it a mark of intelligence to look down, as from a great height, on the traditional belief that there is an underlying purpose in and for humanity, a purpose for the building up of personality and of society. In particular they have discarded as obsolete the thought of controlling the life

* Cf. Chapter IV above.

THE NEW MORALITY

of sex and of weaving it into a constructive system of social relationships. Knowing very well the vast and pervading influence of sex upon both personal and social life, they advocate a morality of sex which would destroy the foundations of a society which is built up on the relations of family and neighbourhood. They see sex in terms of the urban herd, and they are led to a vision of a coming society which will be pushed this way and that by a mechanical rule of science, as the loosely gregarious individual is pushed this way and that by purposeless impulses of desire. For their dark vaticinations they lay the blame on science or any other cause than the real one. The real cause for social fear is the dimness of moral illumination. Without a clear strong light of common social purpose, the forces of mechanism may well be expected to wobble and flounder to our woe. But it is a wry humour to put out the light and then to complain of the darkness.

It is the aim of this chapter to suggest that, by no fault of mechanical science but rather by a defect of social will and intelligence, excessive urbanisation is being allowed to lead to the growth of a human "herd" which lacks moral fibre and produces unhealthy fashions that may infect yet wider circles of society. The moral instability of "low life" in town-areas at one end of the economic scale, is matched by the moral instability of the "high life" at the other end. The social worker tries to help

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

the poor, uneducated people of Basmond,* but he would be a bold man who should offer help to the "smart" groups of the urban herd. Attempts, however, may be made to prevent the anti-social temper of these well-to-do circles from spreading any further. Vigorous efforts, on the other hand, are made by those who regard the life of these circles as "real life" to spread their infection by film and novel, essays and journalism. In between the desperately poor and the well-to-do types of the urban herd lies the mass of ordinary people, and especially of younger men and women, who are uprooted from home and neighbourhood and are drawn into the bewildering vortex of the city by the needs of their work. Many of them still keep touch with family and neighbourhood elsewhere and long for an opportunity to live that life themselves, but many are oppressed by the loneliness of life in a crowd, and fall victims to the essential instability of the urban herd.

The urban herd is not, however, to be identified with the "crowd," though it may easily blend with it. A little time ago some students of social psychology thought to find in the emotions of the crowd the secret of group-life, and to confirm this discovery by using the anthropological suggestion that the primitive and natural bond of social life is to be sought in the gregarious instinct. But these ideas seem to have lost

* See p. 231 below.

favour to-day. We have seen above (p. 149) that the "herd-instinct" as an explanation of the way in which people came to live together has little advantage compared with the deep-rooted instincts of the family and the extension of the sentiments of kin to wider circles of human society. In any case the identification of the "primitive" herd with the modern crowd seems most precarious. For the clue to crowd-psychology lies in the temporary blindness of the members, who compose the crowd, to any steady direction of social purpose. The loosely gregarious temper of the crowd is free from the influence of rigid custom which pervades all examples of human flocks or herds that are known to anthropology. The crowd belongs to urban life. It does not exhibit the natural and primitive passions of men. The excited man in the crowd relapses not upon natural instinct, but upon a kind of lower self; which is attuned to the *vulgus*. So Dr. McDougall writes of the mood of the crowd as "emotional, impulsive, violent, fickle . . . displaying only the coarser emotions . . . easily swayed . . . devoid of self-respect and the sense of responsibility," with a behaviour like that of an "untutored passionate savage in a strange situation." The capacity for social value is only found, he believes, in groups which have some real principle of continuity, some organisation and differentiation of function, some constant body of tradition and custom.

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

But though the urban herd is not to be identified with the excitable crowd, yet there is this in common between them: the instability of temper and social irresponsibility which go with detachment from a firm and valuable social environment.

The social thinker or worker, realising, with sympathy and understanding, the moral and social disadvantages of a loose and often lonely individualism, seeks to provide ways by which the individual may be brought in touch with some healthy form of fellowship, some surrogate for the local and natural forms of group-life. The town-planner hopes that his housing schemes will be a means to real neighbourhood for young married people; so that their family-life may grow up within a stable and helpful environment.

The advocates of the New Morality, starting from the postulate of sexual instability, construct their Utopias on the social model of the urban herd. The new covenant of marriage, whereby men and women are justified in courting each other's wives and husbands, would obviously lead to a ferment of gossip and quarrelling, of jealousy and hatred, of disaster to family life, which would throw any *neighbourhood* into moral and social confusion. There would never be peace. It is indeed only in societies where there is a clear understanding of honour as to marital loyalty that men and women can happily and profitably enjoy

THE NEW MORALITY

friendship with women and men, and that all together can seek to build up a better sort of common social life. Such an understanding is a condition of real and fruitful social freedom and co-operation for good.

This understanding still holds the field in English social life. "Open sin is difficult except for the rich and for artists and writers and others whose profession makes it easy to live in a more or less bohemian society."* Mr. Russell boldly suggests that the standards and requirements of neighbourly life should be re-conditioned to meet the demands of the New Morality. Mr. Aldous Huxley is not so bold.† He suggests that the "life-worshipper" should outwardly conform to social custom as Dr. Jekyll, but should realise his true self away from home as Mr. Hyde: thus offending against Mr. Russell's canon that "everything surreptitious is undesirable." Mr. Huxley is the more practical of the two. He sees that all versions of the New Morality require a virtual anonymity and it is this anonymity, this complete detachment from any kind of social responsibility, which is for some people the great attraction of life in the urban herd. The axiom of free sex is incompatible with the open life of neighbourhood.

It is fairly evident, then, that the New

* *Marriage and Morals*, p. 180. The immediate reference is to unrecognised unions.

† See Appendix B.

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

Morality is a system of sexual ethic which is adapted to the conditions of the urban herd, and that its whole sociological prospect assumes the urban herd as the inevitable issue of the advance of civilisation. But is it really necessary to assume that the urban herd is the goal of social development? Let us glance briefly at the story which leads up to this question.

We may begin with a reference to the speculations of some recent ethnology.* It is supposed that there were three main "primary" developments from the more "primitive" stage of human culture. There were the Nomad Pastoral peoples, who in time produced the conquering races such as the Aryans and the Semites; the Agricultural (matrilineal) peoples, who developed the village community; and the Higher Hunters, who developed the use of metals, and gathered together in towns, becoming craftsmen and traders. Thus very early grew the two main kinds of neighbourhood, the village and the town. In two great areas, Egypt and Mesopotamia, where civilisation began and whence it spread widely abroad, town-life was fully established several thousands of years B.C. The town served the purposes of defence, worship and commerce. It was governed by the priest-king, who usually claimed relationship with the god of the area and ruled in his name. Where this collective life grew up and continued in something like

* See page 109 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

peace and order, great progress was made in arts and crafts, and the town was the centre of a diffusion of culture.

But although these great civilisations were the nursery of many inventions and of the beginnings of scientific agriculture, geometry, astronomy, architecture, painting and so forth, it is doubtful whether they bequeathed to a later world any fruitful seeds of social development. Their society was under the heel of the theocracy. It had no liberty for new social growths. Everything was ordained by the autocratic priest-king, supported by his bureaucracy and his army of soldiers and priests. Moreover, there was a powerful element in religion which must have been a hindrance to social progress. This was the fertility-cult, and it is this religious worship of the reproductive power of nature which, above all, makes us feel the "foreignness" of their civilisation. They were unable to rise to the conception of a personality in which reason and conscience were responsible for the mastery and the guidance of sex, or to the conception of a social order of home and neighbourhood in which sex was given its place, but not more than its place.*

The early theocratic order, with its Nature-

* Still, with these peoples (e.g., in Egypt), sex had a reference to the social order, and, as culminating in the marriage of the god-king, it belonged to the foundation both of religion and politics. Modern attempts to revive this "worship of life" are empty and thin by contrast. They are anti-social in spirit and they discard the vital element of fertility.

religion, has to its credit the record of keeping very large populations together in a real degree of peace, order and prosperity. How little contribution its social philosophy had to bequeath to the later history of mankind may be seen in the story of Egypt.

“Egypt,” writes Mademoiselle Tabouis, in a book* which has received high praise from eminent historians, “was the most feministic country of antiquity.” The Greeks and the Romans mocked at the men of Egypt and called them the slaves of their wives. There was no home in the Roman sense. The man’s official wife ruled her house and could forbid him to enter. Everywhere there was sexual freedom. The authority of the maternal uncle was as great as among the Trobriand Islanders. In fact Egypt, half-way through the second millennium B.C., gives an example of the survival of a debased form of matrilineal society in an advanced material civilisation. The royal court was the centre of the worship of reproduction. The king had a vast harem. So too had the god, and the members of the sacred harem were encouraged in the exercise of their freedom. The royal city of Thebes “swarmed with procuresses.” The real rulers of the land were the great army of “arrogant and greedy” priests, who were concerned little with morality but much with magic. The tomb of Tutankhamen has revealed

* *The Private Life of Tutankhamen*, 1930.

THE NEW MORALITY

the material and artistic splendours of the dynasty, but it was a regime of hideous cruelty, forced labour, tortures, mutilations, impalements. It was a culture which has been more or less copied in later days by other royal courts, and has lain, gleaming like a miasma, above the lives of toiling millions, getting between them and the sun.

Our Western tradition of a social life governed by the institutions of home and neighbourhood seems to spring from other sources than those of Egypt. There lies behind this tradition the very ancient system of ancestor-worship, with the altar in the home, with the hearth as the centre of the religious and social order, and with the paterfamilias as priest-king of the household, who administered the common heritage as the trustee of the Spirit of the Family. The family was a community which included the dead, the living, and those who were yet unborn. It gave a principle of continuity to human life in its most sacred and intimate relationships. It was the nursery of tradition and the beginning of history.

When families settled down together in neighbourhood, there must have arisen various tensions and needs of adjustment. To meet these needs a system of customs would grow up, and the community would be held together by an extension of the family principle of trusting and being trusted. Where honourable understandings were violated, the heads of families

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

would meet to deal with the violations, as in early times among Jews, Romans and Teutons. Where the regime of strict custom and reciprocal trust was in danger, custom would be aided by law. Thus in the life of the early Hebrews, a life in village communities, the Ten Commandments* were set up to regulate relations with one's "neighbours." In this rugged old code are indicated certain instincts which were liable to become inflamed and to bring ruin upon social trust and good neighbourhood. With the earlier precepts of the Decalogue we are not here concerned, save in so far as they recognise an underlying purpose greater than the individual or than any generation of individuals. There follows a precept in support of unity and subordination within the family and of deference for the authority of experience: then warnings against ungoverned operations of the instincts of pugnacity, sex and acquisition. In the ninth Commandment men are warned that neighbourly honour demands that they shall speak truth about their fellows; and, in the tenth, the Decalogue goes expressly behind the world of outward deeds to warn against the inner license of unregulated imagination and desire. It is almost as if the eye of the legislator foresaw the great plagues of history, war, lust, greed, and unfaithfulness to trust. Many lawyers of the Stoic tradition saw in later days how the

* The date of formulation is unknown.

THE NEW MORALITY

Law Natural, which they ascribed to the essential reason of humanity, was clearly reflected in these ancient Hebrew regulations of the life of family and neighbourhood.

The most brilliant development of the arts of neighbourhood is found in the Greek city-states : with their great common life of citizenship, religion, literature, art, and free exchange of ideas. The cities were not too large for neighbourhood, and the wise thinkers expressed their horror at the dangers of the overgrown town and its unorganised herd. But all this fine genius for good neighbourhood was accompanied by a disastrous failure to develop the narrower community of family-life, and the wider community of reasonable relations between one city-state and another. Moreover, as in all the social life of antiquity, their community was built on foundations of slavery. In later days, under the Romans, vapours grew and gathered in the underground cellars of servile existence, which in the end became the poison of social life.

The higher development of the home is ascribed by Mr. Hugh Last* to the Romans, who gave a status to women which was rare among the Greeks. "The Greek view of woman," writes Mr. Last, "was that she should be the silent servant of her husband." She was his intellectual inferior. But, underlying all the hardness of the Roman

* In *The Legacy of Rome*, pp. 209 *f.*, where more justice might have been done to the Hebrew tradition. Nor must we forget the Spartan mother.

law and surviving great changes in morality and culture, there was never lost the great Roman tradition of the Republican era, the dignified and tender tradition of the woman and the home. The *patria potestas* was supreme, but it was exercised normally as by a judge bound to weigh every matter according to an unwritten tradition of justice; and for the decision of great matters there was a family consultation. The Roman matron was her husband's comrade in duty, and her influence in the home kept men saner and more apt for practical wisdom than the quarrelsome Greek. Above all, it was devotion to her children which was celebrated for centuries as the greatest glory of the early Roman matron. And the children were trained for duty.

Under the early Empire came a "general moral collapse."* The old calls of duty were "lulled into silence by the seeming security" of the age. But the tradition of the Roman home had never been lost. In the country and among the Stoics its spirit was kept alive to be handed on to posterity.

The early stages of the life of home and the life of neighbourhood may thus be seen in Rome and Greece. But it must not be forgotten that in one small people the two elements of social life had been happily fused in a way which was not too common in the ancient world. By the

* See p. 121 above.

first century A.D., and probably for centuries before, the monogamous family was firmly established among the Hebrews. Though women had an inferior status to men, yet the Hebrew matron, like the Roman, was a noble figure in history. In the synagogue the Hebrews focussed their life of neighbourhood. The strong tie between family and neighbourhood was knit by the spirit of their religion. It is needless for us to tarry on the obvious truth that the new faith of Christianity brought a vast reinforcement to the ideals of family and home. The Christians found, like the Jews, that social life in the pagan towns was full of difficulties for them. Rightly or wrongly, they held it impossible to fuse their family life with the customs of their locality, and they were too few and too weak to change these customs. They, too, realised the life of neighbourhood in the fellowship of their religious association. It is not indeed until comparatively recent times, and especially until the new freedom and new education of women, that the opportunity has arrived on a really wide scale for the highest and best conjoint development of family and neighbourly life. But the opportunity is lost, in whole or in part, when one or other of these aspects of social life is blotted out by the growth of the urban herd. The loss was notorious in the great cosmopolitan world-city of Rome in the early Empire, and it spread to other cities. Then, as now to some extent in London and

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

elsewhere, the overgrowth of the city, the segregations of rich and poor, the destruction of local associations and interests, have led to a loose and mobile individualism, which is typically manifested in sexual instability. Then, as now, this herd-type has appeared most obviously among the dangerously rich and the desperately poor. In some modern cities, notably in America, the type seems to have forced itself into the more normal society of those who are neither idle rich nor hopeless poor. It would be untrue to say that in our own country the New Morality has not invaded the middle classes, but it is true, I think, to say that it finds its natural social setting in those regions, at the top and at the bottom of the economic ladder, where the ideals of family and neighbourhood are unable to survive.

CHAPTER XII

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD—(*continued*)

THERE is no need to follow out the story of the urbanising policy of Rome in the provinces. In the West it was a failure, and already, before the invasions of the barbarians, society was returning from an urban to a rural economy. Power fell more and more into the hands of the great landowners. And so things remained for a thousand years. The great towns never recovered, even when the age of the invasions was long past. Thus Aquileia, once, under the Empire, the fourth city of Italy, is still only a village to-day. The towns, when they remained, remained chiefly as the fortified strongholds of political and ecclesiastical officers. Later in the Middle Ages, and first in northern Italy, the towns revived as centres of commerce and culture, and as the focus of new movements in literature, art and social experiment. The social ethic of Thomas Aquinas is adjusted to the life of the town, not only because he had studied the Greek tradition, but also because European life was reviving in a way that made it possible to think once more of such a close organic relation of neighbourly life as had once been known in the ancient city-

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

state. The geographical discoveries and the opening-up of new trade-routes in the fifteenth century led to a commercial revolution which sharply stimulated the growth of the Western towns. Last of all, the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries brought about an amazing change, first in England and then elsewhere. By 1920, nearly 80 per cent. of the people of England had come to live in towns. The urban culture and economy, whereby the countryside is not only led but dominated by the town, had hitherto played but a comparatively minor part in the social history of Western civilisation. It now came to play a major part, perhaps for the first time in history, and there are many who have come to hope and pray it has already reached its maximal development and may be checked or even in some measure reversed.

This summary sketch of the story of the town* is meant to suggest that the urbanisation of social life has never, before this last century, reached so great a spread or intensity. When the town has flourished it has been a centre for the invention and diffusion of culture, and when town-life has been decadent there have been periods scant of progress. But the great historical mass of human life has been regulated mainly

* Some of the foregoing points about the story of the town I owe to *The Sociology of City Life*, by Niles Carpenter (Longmans, 1931). In regard to the facts of modern urbanisation, which follow, my debt is still greater.

THE NEW MORALITY

by a rural economy and culture. More than once in the course of history a civilisation dominated by town-life has suffered decay and has yielded to an order governed by country-life.

When the town flourishes there is no necessary interference with the natural and normal life of family and neighbourhood. The concentration of interests and the large number and variety of people who are brought close together in the town have made an opportunity for cultural progress which radiates with quickening influence through the life of neighbourhood in country as well as in town. Only, the *excess* of urbanisation in some great world-cities of antiquity was fatal to the health of moral and social tradition. It is a fatality which has reappeared with the recent excess of urbanisation. Its characteristic result is the growth and disintegrating influence of the urban herd. Until this last century men and women might break away from the normal tradition of family and neighbourhood and "do what they willed." But society was held together by certain canons of social responsibility which were not destroyed by the licence or violence of the runagates. What is new to-day is the growth of a type of urban life which escapes altogether from the social responsibilities which belong to the life of family and neighbourhood.

The Roman Empire perished from within, largely owing to its incapacity to pursue an urbanising policy without undermining the health

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

of local communities. Our own urbanising development is open to a similar danger and from similar causes. Excessive urbanisation tends to destroy the life of family and of the neighbourly traditions which sustained social life in the village and in the smaller kind of town. Beyond a certain point of size the growth of the city seems to exhaust and dry up the homely natural springs of moral and social responsibility. Where civic conditions have begun to weaken the sense of social purpose and to generate a loose unhealthy type of individualism, there the New Morality finds its real opportunity. Further, it may be noted, that by cutting loose the immensely powerful impulse of sex from all connection with moral and social purpose, the New Morality co-operates actively with the morbid type of urbanism in disintegrating the life of family and neighbourhood.

The present condition of Chicago* is a notorious example of the effects of a rapid and excessive urbanisation of social life. But the causes which have produced these effects are operative also

* We shall note below (p. 249) some features of social life in Chicago and their curious coincidence with the rise of a school of "Chicago pragmatism." As reported in *The Times* of January 15th, 1932, the *Chicago Daily News* has just printed an urgent appeal for financial help addressed to the State Legislature of Illinois, an appeal which the State has already received and rejected. The banks have refused any more loans to Chicago. The Mayor is away in Florida trying to get rid of a cold. He says, "It is beyond me what will happen to Chicago." The newspaper says: "We are faced with the early suspension of police and fire protection, the breakdown of the sewage disposal, the closing of schools, and every other form of community service which organized society has set up. The danger of violence, fire, and disease is so imminent as to warrant immediate preparation for the possible invocation of martial-law under which civil rights in a normal community are automatically suspended."

elsewhere. In his *Sociology of City Life*, Mr. Niles Carpenter has organised a vast amount of statistical information about city life in America and on this side of the ocean. He is clear about the baneful influence of the great cosmopolitan city on the welfare of home and neighbourhood. He makes a special point of its influence in producing instability of personal and social life.

Let us note, first, how Mr. Carpenter characterises the areas into which a great and expanding city is normally divided. The dominating area is the Commercial Centre. Here the rise in site-values keeps thrusting out from the centre towards the circumference one business enterprise after another. Here also the congestion of traffic presses for some measure of decentralisation. The old structure of the city cannot be changed. The six main approaches to London still follow the old Roman roads. The erection of vast and towering blocks of business offices, with accommodation for thousands of workers, only multiplies the motor-cars. The traffic problem can hardly be solved. The pressure of this problem adds to the decentralising movement and to the spread of the commercial area. One area pushes another. All areas become transitional in character. Though the process may seem slow, it produces instability of buildings, institutions, habits. The men who "shout for joy" at the sight of a new skyscraper, or at the demolition of quiet streets where people have long been content to dwell or to transact

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

their business, do not think of the effect of all this movement on the social character of the populace.*

Within hail of the Commercial Area is the Residential Area, with its boarding-houses, lodging-houses, blocks of flats, tenement-houses, "multiple dwellings," "rooming houses" and so forth. The character of the area gives less and less encouragement to the life of home and neighbourhood. Beyond this comes the Urban Fringe, partly residential, partly industrial and partly agricultural (market-gardening, poultry, etc.). Then come the Suburbs. Some of these are residential. These have a certain degree of detachment from urbanism proper. They have their own shops and trading affairs, and their own ways of education, recreation, worship. For women and children there are strong local interests; but the men are city-men, who often regard the area as a dormitory and find their real interests elsewhere. The Suburb cannot forget the City or easily gather itself together in a strong life of neighbourhood. The Industrial Suburb has more independence of its own, but suffers from a lack of social variety and leadership.

At some distance from the city there may be the Garden City. Here there is a real opportunity for the life of home and neighbourhood. Daily work for livelihood, common recreations, common

* The speed of these processes is not so great in England as in America. But vast changes have taken place in our great towns even in the present century.

THE NEW MORALITY

institutions for education and for religious, intellectual or æsthetic culture, common interests of self-government in which personality may tell, a real community of life among people who are not too numerous to know something of each other and who have a sense of common social purpose—these things, taken together, make the Garden City a true neighbourhood. Here good and hospitable families radiate happiness and encouragement among others. The reciprocal action and reaction of family and neighbourhood may build up a healthy and intelligent common life. In the web of relationships which grows naturally in such a neighbourhood one factor has a special charm and value. The children who go to school together, play together and visit each other, are a great source of friendships among their elders.

There seems to be no good reason why the Garden City, dependent in some economic ways on the great city but independent of the city in its social life, should not have a valuable future before it. Modern transport makes it possible for such towns to be a good way off from the city. This is necessary if they are to become real neighbourhoods. If they are too near, they may be engulfed in the process by which more and more land round the city is urbanised: and they may be too dependent culturally on the city. They do not, of course, gain anything by being too far away from it: for the city, as a

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

concentration of what is great and fine in culture, has much to give. But they may enjoy, for example, the ease with which they can go up to hear the London concerts, and yet live secure in a life of neighbourhood which excessive urbanism would unsettle and destroy.

It would indeed be a gigantic and superhuman task to re-fashion the many hideous sprawling masses of building which the property and factory owners of the past have allowed to grow up to serve the purposes of industry. But at least it may be possible to guide the future growth of the town a little more wisely than was done in the past. Such guidance is a due which we owe to our artisans. Those who give their labour and skill to mould the products of the earth and shape them to the service of society, are and will be among the most valuable of our citizens. Given security of occupation and a proper reward for their work they have a fair prospect before them. All the elements of culture are now within their reach. It is astonishing to reflect how many good things are now cheap in cost, largely as a result of modern mechanism : for mechanism supplies the ways and means by which ideas as well as persons and goods may freely circulate. But these advantages may become merely decorative and not constitutive of good common life, whenever the natural and healthy order of social life is broken up by the folly of directing authorities who care nothing

for the claims of family and neighbourhood. Thus we get the urban home of the artisan, with no cellar or attic, no garden or yard or store-room, little space for family or neighbourly gatherings, little of the old home crafts of cooking and sewing and household repairs, no place for the children to play in the sun, and more and more dependence on paid services and on things which can be bought round the corner. Thus life often proceeds with home-building at a discount. Families are apt to move from one flat or tenement or district to another. Sometimes they pass out of sight altogether and no one knows where they have gone. Life loses the stability which is necessary for health and growth, and has to carry on without any settled social environment. In one town area in U.S.A. it was found by an investigation that only 10 per cent. of the resident business women and only 50 per cent. of the artisans who lived there had any real friends in the neighbourhood.

The instability of social life in an overgrown city is heightened by the fact that there is a much smaller proportion of older people and of children in urban than in more rural areas. There is a large proportion of younger and middle-aged people: and among these there is less marriage than in the country and a good deal more divorce. The vast development of office work and of retail trade attracts women to the city in such numbers that they are coming to be

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

considerably in excess of the men: a condition of society which is another cause of instability. On the whole, women find a higher social status and a greater economic chance in the city. Multitudes of them are drawn into the "herd" type of social existence, cut off from family and neighbourhood. Among the families and individuals who flock to the city, many, it has been observed, suffer from a "culture-shock," due to the utter strangeness of the rhythm of life which they encounter. Often it is the next generation of these immigrants* which shows most plainly the effects of this disturbing change. The parents have not been able to cope with the crisis. They lose their old traditions and find no new ones; and from their children the ranks of juvenile and so of adult criminals are principally recruited. The excitements, the adventures, the noise, the speed of the city are all in excess. That human nerves can be adapted to urban life is proved by the example of the Jews, who for centuries have been fully urbanised and yet remain biologically healthy and fruitful. But to many other types of humanity city life brings great losses to counterbalance the gains. Spengler goes so far as to say that they lose the desire to do their part in the propagation of the race.

It is untrue to say that the city-dweller is on

* In U.S.A. the problem is rendered more acute in the case of the immigrant from abroad.

THE NEW MORALITY

a lower moral level than the country-dweller. Money more than passion is at the root of crime in the city : because everyone in the city depends on money for everything. A continental survey shews that, in a German-speaking area, two-thirds of the total of passional crimes were in the rural parts and eight-ninths of the thefts in the towns. The vast majority of town-dwellers are law-abiding.* But the influence of the town is not in favour of strong character. A certain boredom and depression, probably a nervous result of the excessive mobility of town-life, leads the town-dweller to take his recreations passively, watching games and pictures. He is not powerful in emergencies. As the Scythians said 2,000 years ago, "they leave the nourishing earth : they put their trust in lifeless things rather than in themselves." Mr. Niles Carpenter concludes that, on the whole, a high degree of urbanisation of life leads to an increase in crime, suicide and mental disease. He attributes these things largely to the prevalent sense of insecurity and instability in social life, and to the special effect of urban conditions upon the immigrant who has been accustomed to a steady and continuous rhythm in both nature and society.

There are numerous individuals and groups who are strong enough to fight against the

* The late Sir Robert Anderson once said, in my hearing, that every morning when he went down to Scotland Yard he was given a great map of London and was always astonished at the few spots on the map from which any crime had been reported.

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

influence of urban conditions, but the results of Mr. Niles Carpenter's enquiry shew how easy it is for the great city to produce the unstable urban herd, the members of which, whether rich or poor or neither, are inclined by the whole cast of their social life towards accepting the principles of the New Morality. Instability of social life, detachment from the natural and healthy environment of family and neighbourhood, conduces to instability in sexual life. It is almost unnecessary to quote Mr. Carpenter's observations on the way in which sex-instability is encouraged in the city by organised and commercialised vice.* We might add the exploitation of sex-appeal in the cinemas. Have we not just heard that a film of the heroic attack on the heights of Mount Kamet has been rejected on the ground that it contains no "love interest"?

It was a judgment of Lord Bryce, that in the history of the United States the one conspicuous failure has been in the government of cities. Who can doubt that this failure in the larger affairs of social polity is connected with a failure in the smaller affairs of neighbourly life? The sense of responsibility that arises from a healthy development of social life in family and neighbourhood should find a way, as a way has been found in many great towns, to a government in accordance

* A suggestion has lately been quoted in *Nature* that normally the herring can see the net, but that the shoal is subject to crowd psychology. Under these conditions the fish rush into the net which otherwise they would avoid.

with moral and social purpose. The growth of mechanisation ought to be a help and no hindrance to social intelligence and goodwill. At the end of his book, Mr. Carpenter quotes Dr. A. V. Kidder, of the Carnegie Institute in Washington, to the effect that cultural downfall has been due to a lack of balance between social sagacity and material achievements, a lag in the growth of social science behind the growth of physical science.

It is one of the most curious delusions of "advanced" criticism that social life can be made better by letting sex-life loose from every kind of control on the part of social purpose. In matters of sex these critics base the major premise of their argument on the new mechanisms of birth-control. They surrender moral culture to mechanism. In another mood the same critics loudly lament the prevalence of mechanism over culture. They see culture in terms of æsthetic individualism. They are vaguely aware that such a partial form of culture tends to undermine its own biological and social foundations. They are uneasy about the drift of civilisation and they try to work off their sense of uneasiness by attacking the achievements of science and by drawing farcical pictures of a society in which culture will be ousted by mechanism. As the builders shouted for joy at the unregulated extension of urbanisation, so the New Moralists have shouted for joy at the mechanical inventions which made possible an

THE PROBLEM OF NEIGHBOURHOOD

unregulated extension of sexual freedom. The two extensions are at one in creating a new instability of moral and social culture, and in weakening the foundations of a social life which is built upon home and neighbourhood. Eagerly welcoming mechanical inventions, when it suits their purpose to do so, and making the most of them when attacking the ethical culture of sex, anon the New Moralists cry out upon mechanism, not considering that its excesses can only be controlled by a moral and social culture which they themselves do their utmost to dissolve. But they are intent upon a culture which is indifferent towards the institution of the family and its natural environment of good neighbourhood.

NOTE ON THE COUNTY OF LONDON.

The Registrar General's Report (June 1932) on the Census of 1931, shews that since 1921 the population of Greater London (calculated as a circle within a 15 miles radius from Charing Cross) increased by nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of a million. In the same decade the County of London, including 28 metropolitan boroughs, lost population by a decrease (growing rapidly since 1901) of about 90,000, the City and the inner boroughs losing most of all. In the County of London the average age of both men and women increases—there are less children in proportion, though the marriage rate is higher, nearly half the families being two-person or three-person families. Two-thirds of these families live in buildings where there are no private letter-boxes or private sanitary arrangements. The County population is nearly 4,400,000. Greater London is moving towards twice that figure. Such facts suggest various inferences biological, social, ethical, as to the results of over-urbanisation.

CHAPTER XIII

A LOW ESTIMATE OF HUMAN NATURE

AN attempt has been made in earlier chapters to shew that neither Biology nor Anthropology can be claimed as allies of the New Morality. Nature has not left herself without witness to the monogamous family. A hierarchy of values is suggested within which sex has its place, and not more than its place. Nature has suggested that sexual and parental love should live together in unity. The New Morality suggests their divorce. Sexual passion is to be relieved from duty towards social purpose.

This social and ethical devaluation of a very powerful passion is no new thing. History has shewn its effect in loosening the bonds which hold society together, and in loosening the inner bond of personality.* Moreover, the desocialisation of sex seems to make morality impossible. For if you are at liberty to set free from social purpose any one instinct or impulse, why may not someone else choose to

* In *William Clissold*, Mr. H. G. Wells has given a brilliant but cruel description of a successful business man who is the victim of sexual freedom. Clissold never had any experience of life in a good home or neighbourhood. Born with a passion for scientific order he finds himself involved in a sexual life which is confused, wasteful and disorderly. Thus he misses unity and peace of mind and is troubled by an uneasy self-consciousness which makes him defiant not only of general society but also of true friendship.

A LOW ESTIMATE OF HUMAN NATURE

claim a similar freedom for any or all of the other human impulses?

The moral philosophers of ancient Greece were familiar with this problem. They were in favour of constitutional rule within the individual soul, and of an outward harmonious order of civil society. They hated that which they called "democracy," which meant to them the inner condition of a rabble of unorganised desires and the outward condition of a rabble of disorderly individuals. They saw that the one condition led to the other.*

For us to-day, morality without purpose would be a labyrinth without a clue. Society would become a bundle of individuals, and each individual a bundle of desires. Morality would become an attempt to get some kind of order into the bundle of desires and into the bundle of individuals: so that there should be as little interference as possible on the part of one desire towards the others, and on the part of one individual towards the others. The string round the bundle would be the duty of non-interference. The aim and object of this freedom from interference would only be that the individual should satisfy as many as possible of his desires to the greatest possible degree. The method of order in the individual and in society would be nothing more than a

* This rabble-philosophy has lately been worked out to its logical conclusion by a writer of fiction. It lies behind many of the modern sex-novels. See Appendix B.

THE NEW MORALITY

convenient adjustment of liberties: not a co-ordination of elements in the service of a common purpose.

Century after century the moral and political philosophers have been engaged in the arduous task of reconciling the conception of freedom with other no less noble conceptions, such as order, loyalty, duty. Freedom has long been a name of beauty and power, dear to every English heart. It is no service to the honour of freedom to reconcile it with duty by cleaving them asunder with an axe.

In the New Morality the names of "virtue" and "duty" are rarely mentioned without derision. Its principle of outward order is that the sexual individual should be absolutely free from interference: and its principle of inward self-control is that the individual should hold himself back from the desire to interfere with the sexual freedom of others. "Love" is an anarchic force.¹ It is subordinate to no social purpose. It tends to be killed by the thought that it is a duty. "To say that it is your duty to love so-and-so is the surest way to cause you to hate him or her."² Even that "deep intimacy, physical, mental and spiritual,"³ which makes a good marriage, contains within itself no shred of reciprocal obligation to sexual loyalty. The sense of such an obligation would be wrong "from the most idealistic standpoint."⁴

There is, however, one exception to this

vindication of sexual freedom and one recognition of a duty towards purpose. If there are children to the marriage, love is "no longer autonomous, but serves the biological purposes of the race." For the sake of children there "has to be a social ethic" which "may" override the claims of "passionate love." But such "interference with love" should be reduced to a minimum.⁵

Still, it is something that the New Morality can recognise that parents have a "duty" towards their children. The question, however, is bound to arise whether parental as well as sexual love does not tend to be killed by the thought that it is a duty. We are probably meant to presume that, in this unique example, love and duty have been able, so far, to dwell together in harmony by a special dispensation of Nature for the sake of biological purpose.

But this happy thought brings only a passing comfort, for, as we have seen already, parental love itself is dwindling away under the influence of an advancing civilisation, and in the end there will be no element in the mind to which biological purpose can make its appeal. Civilisation is also replacing the instincts of the monogamous family by those of the polygamous herd. Everything seems to work together in order to abolish the one permissible interference with sexual freedom, the interference that arises from the existence of children.

THE NEW MORALITY

Such is the corner stone of the New Morality : the sovereign claim of sexual freedom. One of the central impulses of humanity is to be cut free from the control of purpose. If it is found that the social purpose of the family stands in the way of this freedom, then, for all sexual ends, society must exchange the system of the family for the system of the herd. This would be a long step towards the wider gospel of self-realisation which gives sovereign claims to every impulse. There would be freedom, not *within*, and for the sake of, social purpose, but freedom *from* social purpose, and for the sake of the natural rights of a rabble of impulses.

This ulterior tendency of the New Morality has not escaped the notice of its advocates. But we are asked not to believe that the new system consists simply of saying, "Follow your impulses and do as you like." There "should be certain standards of rectitude."⁶ Before we glance at these standards we shall do well to raise a question of psychology which may explain their obvious inadequacy. I do not mean that morality can accept the dictation of psychology. Psychology can only inform us what is the nature of mental process. It has nothing to tell us about the value of purposes. Still, if there is discernible in mental process no soil in which good purpose can take root and find nourishment, morality will be but a sickly plant.

A LOW ESTIMATE OF HUMAN NATURE

In all statements of the New Morality there is some dependence on the New Psychology. So far as the layman can understand it, he believes that real discoveries are being made about the working of the mind and especially of the unconscious mind. But he suspects that the new hypotheses are in a very unstable condition. This is only to be expected in so young a branch of science, which has probably still to pass through a further series of adolescent disorders. When middle-aged people look back on the bewildering series of physical or anthropological or social hypotheses which have been presented to them during the last three or four decades, they ought not to be surprised when they hear of revolutions in the world of psychological hypothesis. It is the great merit of science that it discards an unsatisfactory hypothesis when a better one appears. But it is not a wise policy for Ethics to adjust itself too hastily to what may prove but a passing phase in this or that branch of science.

The most notorious example of such haste is the case of those moralists who were too ready to accept a "Freudian" theory of the infant mind, and to base their speculations on the view that the unconscious mind of the child is the playground of several poisonous tendencies to hate the other members of his family: so that both Psychology and Ethics have to build upon a datum of hereditary mind which was

THE NEW MORALITY

vitiating thousands of years ago by sexual perversion. The moralists, or rather publicists and popularisers, who communicated these views to the general reading public have done much to increase the infirmity of the mentally infirm, to convince the foolish of the incurable nature of their folly, and to spread, among the half-educated, wave after wave of moral depression. In the last decade we have witnessed a psychological attack on all that has hitherto been held to be good in human nature and tradition. Just lately this cosmopolitan movement has given special attention to the psychology of the family.

It would be a foolish venture for those of us who are not trained psychologists to follow these publicists on to the ground of the New Psychology: but in dealing with the New Morality we have to do with some psychological descriptions which are quite easy to consider. We are informed, for example, that the young child is moved by two dominant desires—the desire for power and vanity. This desire for power, we read, covers the whole of life. “It begins first and ends last,” dominating the child and dominating old age.’ The child, we know, is father of the man. What is the element in child-psychology which can modify or neutralise this dominating passion for power? The reply is—vanity, “that makes him a social being and gives him the virtues necessary for life in a community.” Now it would be but a fond

A LOW ESTIMATE OF HUMAN NATURE

parent who saw in his children no signs of the love of power or vanity. But it would be a foolish parent or teacher who saw nothing else. Indeed if there were nothing in the child-soul that could contest the domination of these two selfish desires, there would be nothing to which either parent or teacher could appeal in the hope of better things, and above all no readiness for the reciprocity of love, no filial or fraternal impulse.

The same impulses appear, with an addition, in the summary of Adult Psychology. "The impulses that lead to the complex desires of adult life can be arranged under a few simple heads. Power, Sex and Parenthood appear to me to be the source of most of the things that human beings do, apart from what is necessary for self-preservation."⁸

We shall see presently that the ethic of sex is compared to the ethic of taking food, and therefore is not easy to distinguish from the ethic of self-preservation. Vanity, the other child-motive, has fallen out of its predominance. But vanity is "closely intertwined with sex," and perhaps plays a civilising rôle in that connection. Yet the "pure instinct" of sex is credited elsewhere* with a character which would intensify selfishness rather than reduce it. And, after all, it is very difficult to find in vanity any natural root of unselfishness.

* See p. 51 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

It may be noted in passing that sex is the chief root of Art: for "the impulse to every kind of æsthetic creation is psychologically connected with courtship."⁹ Let us pass over so doubtful a derivation for a Constable landscape or an Eroica symphony and only pause to note that, after all, courtship has but its day, and, when that is past, then apparently good-bye to Art. In any case there seems little basis in this psychology for an Art that is inspired by a disinterested love of beauty.

In regard to Parenthood we agree with this appreciation of its power and of its socialising energy. But once more we have to remind ourselves that in civilised societies this great motive has a falling cadence. It is like a lovely tune on the gramophone which is running down.

Of the three impulses which are said to lead to the desires of adult life, there remains the Love of Power. This continues to dominate the mind from the cradle to the grave. But the New Morality has shewn the baneful character of this impulse in the early history of the family, and makes no pretence of seeing in it anything more than selfishness. We are, therefore, conducted to the conclusion that in the Psychology of Adult Impulse there is no foothold for any inclusive moral purpose, no eye for the hook of goodness, no spiritual fibres reaching out to knit with others the social bond.

Such a psychological conclusion would, if

valid, act with discouragement upon any mind that dreams of the possibility of goodness. Morality would be reduced to a sham. But perhaps the most remarkable feature of this effort to throw overboard disinterestedness from the ship of psychology is its attitude towards Science. Is there some root of goodness, some element to be discerned in Science, that may link it with morality?

We have been brought up to believe that just as the deepest root of Art is a disinterested devotion to Beauty, and to the reproduction of Beauty for the good of mankind: so the deepest reality of Science is the disinterested devotion to Truth, and this love of Truth is intensified by the desire to bring light or help to others. But in the view of the New Morality, Science is just a branch of the same old dangerous Love of Power.¹⁰ The argument is clothed in logical form: "If knowledge is power, then the love of knowledge is the love of power."

If we apply this logic to life, it would run as follows: "If social service leads to the enrichment of personality, then the motive of service is egoistic." Or again, "You think you eat to live: but you take pleasure in eating: *ergo*, you eat for pleasure." Or just in the same way: "Plato, Newton, Lister, Pasteur, you sought to think scientifically and you imagined it was from love of knowledge for its own sake, and perhaps to do good to men or to relieve their

THE NEW MORALITY

pain. But you were deceived. Scientific thought brings power. Therefore your motive was the love of power." Abraham Lincoln is selected as a butt for this type of argument. On a certain occasion, when dealing with some troublesome senators, he asserted that his office was clothed with great power.¹¹ Then follows the apt comment that throughout all politics the two chief forces are the economic motive and the love of power.

The naked identification of Science with the acquisition of Power is pressed home in unmistakable terms. "Science enables us to realise our purposes, and if our purposes are evil the result is disaster." The results of Science may be exploited for selfish ends. That is only too well known: but is it therefore necessary to strip the motive of Science so completely naked of any natural kinship with good purpose? The results are serious for the Coming Age of the New Morality, for "Science is new in the world and has not that authority due to tradition and early influences that religion has over most of us: but it is perfectly capable of acquiring the same authority";¹² and "when science has become old and venerable it will control our lives as much as religion has ever done."¹³ Thus Religion, which at least makes some pretence of encouraging good purpose among men, will hand over the reins of society to Science which makes no such pretence at all.

A LOW ESTIMATE OF HUMAN NATURE

It can hardly be denied that the prospect is profoundly discouraging to any one who believes there is any kind of meaning in morality. But it is in logical keeping with a psychology which finds no home for goodness among the natural impulses either of the child or of the man.

What we have been looking for in this psychology is some element in the soul which is not purely self-regarding. It is true that we ought not to go to psychology either for a vindication of values or for a principle of obligation, but we may reasonably hope for some assurance from psychology that there is an element in mental process which is *apt* for morality.

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

¹ pp. 249, 103.

² p. 113.

³ p. 249.

⁴ p. 113.

⁵ p. 104.

⁶ p. 243.

⁷ p. 233.

⁸ p. 233.

⁹ p. 230.

¹⁰ p. 233.

¹¹ p. 234.

¹² p. 213.

¹³ p. 214.

CHAPTER XIV

OF HUMAN MORALITY

WE have now seen how difficult it must be for the New Morality to make any claim to be a morality; for its psychology is egoistic. Vanity and the Love of Power are assumed to be the ruling motives of the child and the man. There is indeed one "other-regarding" motive in human nature: the parental instinct. But this is being worn away by "civilisation," and, in view of the future, the New Morality has prepared a scheme of social life in which the State will take over the functions of the family. They will no longer be entrusted to the exhausted energies of the parental instinct.

In this new order of social life the "polygamous instincts" of civilised men and women will be left absolutely free. The family "affords the only rational basis for the limitation of sexual freedom."¹ When the family has been destroyed, as with a fair amount of certainty we may expect it to be destroyed by modern feminism,² there will be no rational considerations that can be urged against sexual promiscuity.

But "love" should be "idealised." It should be "a tree whose roots are deep in the earth but whose branches extend into heaven."³ It

OF HUMAN MORALITY

has "its own proper ideals and its own intrinsic moral standards." It is "an anarchic force, which, if it is left free, will not remain within any bounds set by law or custom. So long as children are not involved, this may not greatly matter."⁴ In the new order of society there will be no limitations set on "love" by family responsibilities. It will expand freely in its natural "autonomy" and "anarchy."

It is obviously difficult to make this sort of idealism yield any kind of morality. "Love" indeed is exalted very high. But its idealism is egoistic. The regard for the "beloved person" is "an instinctive extension" of "egoistic feeling."⁵ There is no hint about devotion to the beloved person for his or her sake.

This is still more obvious in another example of the extension of egoistic feeling. "A legitimate child is a continuation of a man's ego, and his affection for the child is a form of egoism."⁶ It will be remembered* that this particular form of egoism was the ruin of "love as a relation between men and women," because it led to the invention of wifely "virtue." It is somewhat confusing to find that love, as an extension of egoistic feeling, is represented as good in one case and bad in the other. May it not be due to the fact that the New Morality made a false start in adopting an egoistic psychology, and falls into confusion when it finds that from

* See p. 89 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

such a beginning it is impossible to go on to a morality? Sheer egoism can never become "moral": and neither in parental nor in sexual ethics can it be right to speak of "love" without allowing room for some element of devotion.

The confusion of thought becomes still more obvious when the "pure instincts" of sex and parenthood are so violently contrasted that it is a wonder they could ever co-exist within one heart. "The *purely instinctive** man, if he could have his way, would have all women love him, and him only." Here, with courageous realism we are told the truth about the raw material of sex, as viewed by the New Morality. On such an appetite monstrous in greed and jealousy, it would indeed be hard to build up a morality. The moral devaluation of sex could hardly go further.

The *instinct* of parenthood, on the contrary, is described "*in its purity*" as an "impulse to care for the young, not to demand affection from them." It would be truer to say that parental love seeks to encourage a response from the child, and is not completely satisfied without it: though the love itself is so strong and patient that it goes on when the child is ungrateful, or even incapable of response. In the New Morality, however, its altruism is absolute.

* My italics here and below.

We are thus presented with a contrast: the absolute egoism of the sexual impulse, and the absolute altruism of the parental impulse. How could two such impulses live and work together in any one personality without tearing it to pieces? Be the answer what it may, the problem is given a practical solution in the New Morality by divorcing the operation of these instincts. The activities of sexual love and the activities of parental love are to be separated both in theory and in fact. Moreover, parenthood seems to be going off in a decline, and sex will soon have no embarrassment even from the shadow of a rival.

For any other than the "new" morality, such absolute egoisms and altruisms are mere abstractions. If the "pure instincts" of psychology were of this nature there could be no morality. For these instincts would have nothing in common by which they could be harmonised in a personal unity; and, in regard to relations with others, neither pure egoism nor pure altruism is of any use for morality. Morality implies some real degree of devotion to a purpose of life which includes both you and me and the other people.

What, then, is the point of view of ordinary, as distinct from the "new," morality? It is, I suppose, that, psychologically, there never has been this violent contrast between the sexual and parental instincts: from the earliest times

THE NEW MORALITY

they were successfully and happily complicated together. This complication, with all its immeasurable consequences for good, was possible and natural because both impulses contained the capacity for devotion to the interests of others. Even in the most primitive human creature, sex, we may fairly presume, was more or less suffused with loving care, at any rate when associated with the family. Nature herself had prepared, even in the higher animals, this fruitful unity of sex and parenthood.

The family is the natural school in which human beings learn how to be themselves and at the same time to find room in themselves for a variety of interests which are not exclusively their own. It is the model of life in community, and it provides the pattern for all morality that is founded on the notion of a common good purpose to which one belongs, and through which one belongs to others.

We read that the "love of man and woman and the love of parents and children are the two central facts in our emotional life."⁸ If that be so, it is a serious matter to divorce these two "loves" from one another. But the divorce is inevitable if it be true, as we have been told, that the biological union of sex and parenthood has become incompatible with the psychology of civilised men and women. The inner opposition between the two instincts, in their "purity,"

OF HUMAN MORALITY

is now to be matched by the open rupture of their union in social life.

Many wise thinkers have pondered over the morality of sex. They have recognised it as one of the most difficult problems of ethics. They knew very well that once the sex instinct is divorced from its natural environment in the family it tends to become inflamed, and burning like a fire, to consume all that is fair and noble in human life. Other instincts, such as pugnacity and acquisitiveness, were no less liable to become inflamed, and, by public war and private greed, to devour the health of human society. In all these matters, the thinkers strove to embody in the law and custom and inner mind of society some principle of obligation which should express the true and permanent meaning and purpose of instinct and thus guide it in ways serviceable to the welfare of mankind.

To the New Morality the problem of sexual morality is perfectly simple. The solution proposed is *laissez-faire*. The impulse of sex is to be de-socialised. Its exercise must not be interfered with by any requirements of social purpose. Within both the individual organism and the social organism, "love" is to be autonomous. The old idea that it should be associated with family responsibilities is gone for ever.

The simplicity of this solution is only matched by the simplicity of the faith which is put in

THE NEW MORALITY

its beneficent power. The world, we read, is "filled with malevolence and hate."⁹ Religion cannot help. "It is possible* that mankind is on the threshold of a golden age; but, if so, it will be necessary first to slay the dragon that guards the door, and that dragon is religion." Can Science help? No; for, as we have learnt, Science, though likely to dethrone religion, has no power to guide purpose. Where then can we look for any hope that the world may be filled with love instead of hate? The answer is that we may hope for aid from a new sexual ethic and education. The evil passions which fill the world with hate are "to a very great extent" due to a wrong sexual ethic and a bad sexual education.¹⁰ The right sexual ethic is illustrated a few lines below, by a forecast of the ease with which women might choose the fathers of their children on scientific grounds and reserve their sexual love for other men. But the way in which this new ethic is to save the world from hate is not actually stated.

It is recognised, however, in the New Morality that it would be absurd to offer to the world an ethical theory which is *absolutely* devoid of any suggestion of the need of self-control.

* Mr. Russell, quoted in *Modern Churchman*, August, 1931. It may be noted that at an earlier stage he held that the problems of sex and marriage need "some form of religion, so firmly and sincerely believed as to dominate even the life of instinct"—quoted in *Why Mr Bertrand Russell is not a Christian*, by H. G. Wood (S.C.M.). For an example of religious wisdom in dealing with these problems see *The Relevance of Christianity*, F. R. Barry (Nisbet, 1931). Many young people have found help in Canon Streeter's *Moral Adventure* (S.C.M.).

The one great need is for the control of jealousy. There must be no interference, by husband or wife, with the "autonomy of love" in the life of their partner. But other grounds are added for the need of self-control. Sex is compared with food. "From a psychological standpoint the desire for sex is precisely analogous to the desire for food and drink."¹¹ This seems to be too sweeping a statement, when we remember that the "pure instinct" of sex, in man, moves him to desire that all women shall love him and him only. Such a large and jealous appetite has no analogy in the case of eating and drinking.

The psychological analogy of sex and food is used as the basis for an ethical analogy. In accordance with this, certain "standards of rectitude" are set up. "In regard to food we have restraints of three kinds, those of law, those of manners, and those of health." Restraints on the exercise of sex are "of a similar kind," but "more complex."¹²

We regard it as "wrong to steal food, to take more than our share at a common meal, and to eat in ways that are likely to make us ill." Of these three "standards of rectitude" the first, self-control in observing the law of property has little to do with sex: for the New Morality does not allow any claim to possession or any proprietary interest in the sex-life of another. The third standard of rectitude, self-

THE NEW MORALITY

control for the sake of one's own health, is only a matter of self-preservation. In regard to any morality, other than self-regarding, we are left with the analogy of table-manners. The problem of self-control is reduced to an affair of etiquette.

The moral philosophers of the past, some of them, at any rate, much larger and finer thinkers than any one now alive, would have been very much surprised if they had foreseen that ethical thought would one day be reduced to such expedients. But, then, they could in any case have found little to please them in a system of Morality which treats Conscience as the "unreasoning acceptance of precepts learnt in early youth" and as an irrational "uprush of infantile beliefs":¹³ a system also which keeps up a steady machine-gun fire of derisory bullets against every conception of sexual "virtue" or "duty." They would have tried, without taking refuge in mockery, to meet the need for fresh light that is felt by old and young.

But, with all the mockery, there are occasions on which the New Morality uses the tone of serious ethical discussion. For example, we read that "morality in sexual relations" consists of "respect for the other person and unwillingness to use that person solely as a means of personal gratification without regard to his or her desires."¹⁴ But this is only an example of the system* which

* See p. 195 above.

sets up *desires* or impulses as the criterion of morality. Supposing his or her desires are obviously bad—what then? *Ought* a man to go on treating a drunkard to drink? *Ought* men or women to seduce others just because they are skilful enough to arouse their desires? Is it really possible to base a morality on the assumption that desires, sexual or otherwise, are always in the right and that there is no need to subordinate impulse to purpose?

In regard to “respect” for the other person, the older teaching made it clear that it is only when we have learnt to love ourselves as servants of a higher purpose that we can usefully love our neighbours *as* we love ourselves.

But the New Morality shews in one example a spirit of considerable earnestness. This is when it deals (too tenderly) with a type of moral anæmia which leads men and women to avoid “love” in order to keep their individuality intact! These invalids are exhorted in terms which are reminiscent of the older morality: such as “devotion to persons or things or merely to a vision,” as a cure for their selfish individualism, and as a means to the “enrichment of individuality.”¹⁵ But even here the old thought is checked before it comes to its proper end. The self-centred individual is to die to his selfishness, but the seed is to die *in order to enrich itself*, not that it may bear much fruit.

The New Morality does not, indeed, appear

THE NEW MORALITY

to see any other end or purpose of good action than the enrichment of individual æsthetic experience. The "mental" element in "love," which is to save it from the brutality ascribed to the characters in Mr. Aldous Huxley's novels, is an element of æsthetic satisfaction. So, too, the value of fatherhood is described "with hesitation" as a value the loss of which brings "emotional triviality;" and a happy family life may give a "rich" or "fructifying experience." The keynote is always æsthetical and not ethical.

If we now turn our attention to the inmost centre of the New Morality we shall find that it is dominated by the æsthetic valuation of feeling and emotion. What is this inmost centre? It is the doctrine that neither husband nor wife should expect or claim any sexual loyalty from the other. Such a claim would be a violation of sexual freedom.

"It is, of course, a very good thing"—no reasons are given—"when a husband and wife love each other so completely that neither is ever tempted to unfaithfulness." But supposing temptation happens to come, there is no moral principle by which it ought to be resisted: for *"to close* one's mind in marriage against all approaches of love from elsewhere is to diminish receptivity and sympathy and the opportunities of valuable human contacts. It is to do violence to something which from*

* My italics.

the most idealistic standpoint is in itself desirable."¹⁶ Those who marry with the *intention* to be faithful to their partners are guilty of violating an ideal.

The probability that temptation will come is shewn to be a result of civilisation, and especially of the "new opportunities of conjugal infidelity" provided by the "growth of women's freedom." "The opportunity gives rise to the thought, the thought gives rise to the desire, and in the absence of religious scruples the desire gives rise to the act."¹⁷ That is a sentence which might have been imported bodily from any of the older moralists. Age after age they have spoken of temptation as the conjunction of desire and opportunity. They warned men to be armed beforehand against this dangerous conjunction. They urged them to be ready to fight it. But the New Morality, on the contrary, warns "civilised" people of the folly of all this fighting against temptation. They should consider that the alliance of polygamous instinct and social opportunity is far too strong for them to contend with.

Now that the forces of temptation have become so overwhelming and the maintenance of married loyalty has become so great a strain for civilised men and women, it is necessary for Law, Morality and Public Opinion to be readjusted accordingly. The idea that adultery implies anything unworthy of the highest standard of married honour is to be finally discarded.

THE NEW MORALITY

The way in which temptation comes home to the individual is explained very clearly. Civilised men and women "may fall deeply in love . . . but sooner or later sexual familiarity dulls the edge of passion and then **they begin to look elsewhere for a revival of the old thrill.*"¹⁸ It is granted that, where fixed social custom recognises the bonds of marriage as final, there is little to provoke the imagination to wander outside; but no such custom survives among "civilised people in the modern world."¹⁹ Nor, we may add, would such a custom be acceptable to "civilised people whether men or women," if they were "generally polygamous" by instinct. Under the influence of civilisation both instinct and custom have been changed. Everything tends to encourage the impulse to look elsewhere for a revival of the old thrill. The situation has changed and morality must be adjusted to it. Hence the offer of a New Morality.

The *thrill* has an obvious value for certain newspapers and picture-houses which seek every day to stir the sensations of large masses of people. But a *morality* of thrills may lead to serious consequences, not only in matrimonial affairs. A University graduate of New York has just been arrested for the murder of a taxi-cab driver. He confesses that he had no other motive for the murder than that he wanted a thrill.†

* My italics.

† *The Times*, June 3rd, 1931.

OF HUMAN MORALITY

If the young man was a philosophical hedonist, no doubt he had balanced the value of the thrill against the value of his victim's life, just as a faithless husband may balance his desire for a new sexual thrill against the happiness of his wife—in both cases to the disadvantage of the other person.*

The offer of a New Morality contains not only a vindication of sexual freedom but also a justification of the impulse to seek a new thrill. It is justified "from the most idealistic standpoint" as leading to an increase of "receptivity and sympathy and of opportunities of valuable human contacts." Such is the "idealism" which governs the new story of sex and the family.

Once more, perhaps, we may pause to note how deeply the discussion of these subjects is affected by judgments of value. What is to the mind of one thinker the laudable desire for a new thrill, appears to the mind of another the unworthy hankering after mere change. It is common ground with the high morality and the New Morality that the impulse of sex contains an element of restlessness and inconstancy. By one theory this is regarded as a degeneration, or at all events, an element to be controlled by

* We might add another example. "There is no æsthetic thrill to compare with the sheer ecstasy of driving round a really blind corner at a scorching speed, especially at night." Thus, in an interview, a prominent member of a University Motor Club, as recorded by the *Daily Herald*, September 3rd, 1931. But an undergraduate suggests that the interview was part of a game called "pulling the reporter's leg."

THE NEW MORALITY

rational and moral culture. By the other theory it is viewed as the psychological basis of an æsthetic ideal.

The contrast between these two types of theory may be illustrated by the way in which a very careful social thinker of our own day has dealt with the desire for a new thrill. In Professor Urwick's new book, *The Social Good**, we are given a view of social life as a whole which, I think, helps the mind to see things in their proportion. He considers that there are "very deep reasons for allowing to women a much wider right to claim a dissolution of marriage than should be allowed to men." Women have less "hankering for change" than men, and he thinks that a mistaken marriage brings them "far severer penalties."

He is not, therefore, a diehard on divorce, but he regards it as the "glory of human love between the sexes that is able to lead us on to a spiritual union." He asks (p. 31) how it is that there are "countless thousands of marriages which lead on to the very finest form of companionship," and he replies that "it is because from the very first day they know their union is permanent and indissoluble" and accordingly

* By Professor E. J. Urwick (Methuen, 10s. 6d.). This, I think, is a book which might well be read before approaching the consideration of sex and its place in human life. Professor Urwick has a wide knowledge of social life, both theoretical and practical. For many years he gave his life to social work in a quarter of London where he was able to gain a practical insight into the life of our poorer wage-earning population.

“they have the will to build on and up until they have made of their companionship a house of friendship.”

Professor Urwick comments on the “attractiveness” and what he calls the “rotteness” of a policy of sexual change as a way of finding the soul’s affinity. On the other side of the Atlantic there seem to be regions where this policy is in favour with the foolish. “An American friend whom I can trust told me of a man he knew, a commercial traveller. . . . In seven years he was divorced four times. . . . On nearly every trip he met his ‘soul’s affinity,’ his ‘true bride,’ the woman who was ‘his wife in the eyes of God.’ If the woman he happened to be married to at the time refused to divorce him, she was condemned by all her friends and regarded as a puritan, a spoil-sport, and one who stood between two true hearts.”* Professor Urwick considers this to be a rotten form of romanticism, and to the married man who hankers after change he says, “You craven! Take the affinity you have got and be thankful that it is no worse. She is probably much too good for you; you yourself are probably the cause of any failure, and would make a tragedy of any union because you put yourself first.”

Thus, in one view, if men resist the temptation of adulterous desire, they violate an ideal; but according to the other view they shew a

* *The Problem of Right Conduct* (Longmans), by Peter Green.

THE NEW MORALITY

courageous and constructive loyalty which is the salt of social good.

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

¹ p. 134.

² p. 171.

³ p. 224.

⁴ p. 103.

⁵ p. 102.

⁶ p. 26.

⁷ pp. 151-2.

⁸ p. 224.

⁹ p. 211.

¹⁰ p. 211.

¹¹ p. 227.

¹² p. 229.

¹³ pp. 244-5.

¹⁴ p. 122.

¹⁵ pp. 101-2.

¹⁶ pp. 246, 113

¹⁷ p. 112.

¹⁸ p. 112.

¹⁹ p. 110.

CHAPTER XV

OF SOCIAL LIFE

THE human heart, occupied from childhood by vanity and the love of power, has no natural impulse towards goodness or beauty or truth. This is the impression left on the mind by the Psychology and Ethics of the New Morality. It is curiously similar to the impression that was aimed at by the old-fashioned preacher who introduced his message of hope by labouring to prove the total depravity of human nature. But the preacher believed in his message of life, whereas the New Morality has nothing to offer but a message of death. This fatal character of sexual freedom has been hinted to us, not obscurely. It may mean the extinction* of the class that puts the rights of sexual freedom above the rights of the family. But whatever the consequences—such is the argument—nothing could be worse than things as they are. Compared with “the rising tide of immorality,” the New Morality claims to be comparatively moral.

We noted earlier† the uncompromising description of the young woman of to-day as having no principle in heart or mind which is strong

* See p. 56 above.

† See p. 55 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

enough to stand up against the urgency of sexual desire. Relieved of one or two servile fears, she knows no reason for restraint. Nor have the parental instincts any strength to withstand the influence of civilisation. The family is decaying fast. Moreover, the ideas and feelings of conjugal honour and loyalty are subject to the same disintegrating influence. "The more civilised people become, the less capable they seem of life-long happiness with one partner," and "among civilised people in the modern world, not many marriages after the first few years are happy."¹ This has become so obvious that people have come to give up the hope of combining a civilised existence with the ideal of marital fidelity, so that "in many modern marriages faithfulness is not demanded."² Married loyalty is a virtue only for the uncivilised.

Further, chastity and courage appear to be incompatibles. Young men who are chaste are "probably timid,"³ a remark which would evoke homeric laughter from hundreds of young men I have known. As to young women who are chaste we need only quote a description of the virginal mind which few "Freudians" could better. Though there are "exceptions," she "has, as a rule, become timid, while at the same time instinctive unconscious jealousy has filled her with disapproval of normal people and with a desire to punish those who have enjoyed what

she has foregone.”³ Courage, therefore, is a virtue reserved for the disciples of the New Morality.*

There is more than a touch of venom in these aspersions on chastity. Anyone who has had experience of social work in this country knows very well how largely it is sustained by the generosity and the magnanimous self-giving of unmarried men and women. But the “sociologist” is warned that such people “cannot feel towards the rest of the world that kind of generous warmth without which their social activities are pretty sure to be harmful.”⁴

The essential aim of the New Morality is to disentangle sexual freedom from any limiting connexion with social purpose. All the ideals, customs or institutions which refuse to accept this dissociation are enveloped in an atmosphere of unrelieved disparagement. It reminds one of the wholesale methods of war-time propaganda, by which suggestions were rained upon the enemy that his cause was already lost.

But there are one or two aspects of this campaign which deserve a more special attention. I refer to the attempt to deprive both civilisation and the emancipation of women of those moral values which are usually ascribed to them. These are large questions indeed. We shall only glance at them briefly in order to illustrate the

* For one of the “exceptions,” see p. 239 below.

methods of the New Morality. And we must try to be fair to the facts as we know them.

On this matter of fairness we may pause for a while in order to observe once more how easily philosophers may differ in their interpretation of the facts of life. Mr. Walter Lippmann,* a grave and careful American writer, whose book gives the reader a sense of confidence in the author's desire to be true to the facts, considers that, among the chief difficulties of the modern discussion of sex, is the difficulty of knowing the actual facts. "Sexual behaviour eludes observation and control." For all we know it may be generally governed by a fine restraint or "it may be that incredible licentiousness exists about us as the gloomier prophets insist." Or again, it may be that there is "just about as much unconventional conduct and no more than there has always been . . . if there is restraint it is, in the last analysis, voluntary: if there is promiscuity, it can be quite secret."

But the author of *Marriage and Morals* has no such hesitation in forming a judgment on the facts of social life in America. By means of sweeping generalisations he draws a revolting picture of the alcoholic and sexual debauchery among the younger generation in that country, ascribing to it a condition of sexual promiscuity. He offers advice for the moral improvement of this condition.

* In his *Preface to Morals*, p. 286.

In touching upon the unsympathetic character of parental control in America, he writes : " How much more civilised are the Trobriand Islanders, where a father will say to his daughter's lover, ' you sleep with my child ; very well, marry her.' " ⁵ This is indeed to quote the Trobriand Islanders to quite another purpose than was done in the author's main argument.* There, the whole argument depended on the " complete free love " among the unmarried and the total absence of paternal authority among those islanders.

But the really serious suggestions which are offered to the Americans are based on the principle that " all sex relations which do not involve children should be regarded as a purely private affair. " ⁶ If that which was secret now becomes " private, " this only means that it should now be done without any disapproval on the part of public opinion. Public opinion should let it alone. It is the central message of the New Morality about married life, that " husbands and wives must learn to understand that, whatever the law may say, in their private lives they must be free. " There too, " private " does not mean " secret. " It only means that in regard to adulterous liaisons either partner must let the other alone.

When the author comes to deal with his

* See above p. 88.

THE NEW MORALITY

own country, things are described as being not yet quite so bad as in America, but bad enough to suggest that there is no hope that they can become better unless they are re-organised by the New Morality. Apart from the Trobriand Islanders and the Romans under the early Empire, there is, I think, no word of approval except for Soviet Russia, where "the Government is on the side of the new morality." The state of things in England is described in a way which seems to claim wide knowledge. For example, "Very many girls of respectable families have ceased to think it worth while to preserve their 'virtue'."

It is not easy to argue about such generalisations as these. They mostly represent contemporary sexual life as empty of moral purpose, and as a faithful reflection of the moral emptiness which psychology is said to have discovered in the soul. Is it necessary to take so depressing a view of our neighbours? That depends, no doubt to some extent, on our own neighbourhoods. It would be more scientific if both optimists and pessimists could give at least some indication of the circles of society in which they have lived and worked. Without such a living and working experience no one can get at the real facts of social life. Statistics of crime and divorce and (what seem to be) wilfully childless marriages may be quoted; but they do not get to the heart of the real

question, namely, whether the control of sexual life has lost all sense of moral and social purpose.

About a year ago I wrote as follows for a friend who was puzzled about the condition of sexual life in England. I wonder how far my little enquiry would find an echo in the mind of other observers.

“ You asked me whether I thought that sexual morality had gone to pieces, and I kept your question in mind while I was moving from place to place. Have you read the fine book on *England*, written half a dozen years ago by Professor Dibelius* of Berlin? He offers a more refined analysis of English hypocrisy (the Professor does not use the word) than is given by the usual continental critic. But he is not an indiscriminate admirer of our character. The English he considers to be animated by the love of power. But when their power is secure they are kind and liberal. Our landowning oligarchy of the eighteenth century type used politics to get power for themselves, but were good easy men to their neighbours. Our policy of Empire has been a policy of power, but always associated with an ideal for mankind. The work of Lord Robert Cecil,† or again of the World Alliance of the Churches, for peace, are good examples of the way in which England has sought to

* He died in 1931.

† Now Viscount.

THE NEW MORALITY

spread abroad an ideal for humanity as no other nation has done. England is liberal so long as its power is secure, free to follow right so long as sure of might.

“ He speaks well of sexual morality in England, considering that its high level is not to be ignored in spite of some post-war and passing instabilities and in spite of certain groups in London, and a few sections of young people, for example, among University students. Perhaps the Professor lets us off rather too lightly on this point. There are some very black spots in England. For example, a young friend of mine wrote out for me lately a description of morality in one quarter of London; where the lack of any power to resist folly and evil was shewn by the fact that the people in general, and his boys in particular (he was in charge of a Settlement), were unable to stand against the wiles of a ‘flood of professional swindlers,’ betting touts who ‘filched every Sunday the greater part of their week’s wages.’ My correspondent proceeds: ‘It was uncommon for people to go through any legal form of marriage until towards the close of the war, when they found that it was impossible to get pensions, etc., without producing Marriage Lines. After the war, marriage in Church became general, but the practice of swopping wives left the state of things little better—if not worse—than before. I doubt whether twenty-five per cent of my boys could have

told, with any certainty, who were their fathers'.*

“At the other extreme of the economic ladder no doubt there are various ‘London groups,’ as Dibelius says, in which sexual relations are almost as casual as in the quarter just described. By the way, my young friend is anxious that his evidence should not be traced home to him. Let us therefore, if we discuss the matter, call that quarter of London ‘Basmond.’ The top of the ladder we may call the ‘Grand Hotel du Monde.’ It is a sphere frequented by people well-known in the divorce courts, whose photos often adorn the popular picture-papers, and their type of morality is celebrated in the less respectable picture-houses from China to Peru. In the lounge of the hotel, so to speak, may be seen certain novelists who resort thither in order to gather material for an interpretation of English social life.

“As it happens I have been visiting lately a number of districts in the country where things are very different. One of the most encouraging features of country life is the good effect of civilisation. In one village I was told that life was altogether brighter and more interesting nowadays for all the younger people. Good work is to be had some miles away which can be reached by cycle or motor-cycle. Good pay too, at any rate in comparison with the

* This reversion to the matrilineal system is worth noting.

THE NEW MORALITY

traditional wages. Many of the poor old agricultural labourers sit at home of an evening and gloom over the dull hard years they have spent, and compare them with the better luck of their juniors.

“In another district I stayed at a farm where the advantages of civilisation were also fairly evident. Relays of workers came in to the farmhouse for dinner and were enormously cheered by the wireless. The motor-buses took them, cheaply enough, to frequent entertainment in the town. The farmer’s children had all enjoyed a good secondary education. In these parts the proportion of children who pass on to secondary schools is very remarkable. Everyone is keen on music. The Women’s Institute does a fine work of socialisation and civilisation among the older women. I had a good talk with the farmer’s wife and asked her a few questions about local morals and manners. She said things were not bad and were certainly growing no worse. What troubled her most was that when things went wrong—she recalled a few cases—it was always the girl who suffered. The man found it easy enough to marry someone else, but no one would marry the girl. Divorce practically unknown.

“I had a talk with a large farmer two hundred miles away from the last place. He said things were far better nowadays. The level of life

was higher. The young men got about to other places, knew more of the world, were neither shy nor stupid: and morality had gained. People had more things to talk about. Their minds were less idle for mischief. The desires of the flesh, though active enough, did not have so much of their own way. Education and civilisation had brought many new interests into life.

“In another district, far away from this, I ran into a lot of camp-life. Never before in Wales, they say, such a year as this for camping.* Most of the boys and girls were from the slums, and it was good to see their health and joy in these few days of escape. The camp-leaders are people of education who devote part of their scanty holidays to this good work. They know the youngsters are not little ready-made saints, and indeed they could quote, as I could quote, evidence of a good deal of squalid sexual demoralisation among young people in the towns. But the leaders are full of hope, believing that the best way to bring health to the growing mind is to feed it with a generous diet of happy and good interests, so that sex may have its place, and not more than its place, in the life and thought of the young.

“Again, I stayed a few days in an ancient market-town and made some enquiries from friends who knew the district well. They told

* 1930, not 1931 !

THE NEW MORALITY

me there was a divorce case pending, but it was a rare thing in their neighbourhood.

“Thence I had to pass on to see some friends in a new district, ten miles or so from a considerable town. The population is about two thousand. It shews a remarkable variety of common life. A very good flower-show, music, dramatics, arts and crafts, an excellent recreation ground, draw a large proportion of the people into friendly relations. It would be hard to find a place which more closely realised Mr. Shaw’s ideal of equality of income. There are no rich to disturb the simple flow of social life, and the whole community seems to be withdrawn from the bitter sort of struggle for existence. It is fine to see the natural sociality of a neighbourhood which is free from these two drawbacks. Here I could gather little or nothing of any breakdown of sexual morality. True, ‘there was that one bad case.’ A married farmer had seduced a girl, and the lady who told me about it expressed her surprise that there was no group of men who would act for the community and take him on the heath and thrash him.

“Well, that is the end of my little enquiry. It is not often that I move about so much within a few months. Such information as I got was all at secondhand, but it was from people in each case who knew pretty well what they were talking about. I fancy things are far worse in some of the towns. People who don’t have to work

for their living in the ordinary way, and people in low-down quarters like Basmond, probably provide most of the trouble. But there is more in it than that. However, I must not start to talk about the towns.* As regards the other parts of English life I agree with Dibelius rather than with our 'realistic' novelists, who seem to think they see courageously when they shut their eyes to everything that is good."

.

I have quoted this testimony, not as scientific evidence, but as shewing—so far as it goes—what many of us believe, namely, that in places where the natural order of home and neighbourhood continues, there are few signs of a complete moral breakdown: further, that the mechanical arts of civilisation tend to brighten and elevate the traditional morality of social life, and *not* to disintegrate and destroy it. The moral reformer has still plenty to work for in the country as well as in the town, and within the family as well as without it. But the social revolution, whereby the family is made to subserve the interests of sexual freedom, has not yet arrived, and indeed can hardly be said to be visible on the horizon.

The future hope of the New Morality hangs almost entirely on the psychology of women. What are the deepest and strongest forces in

* In regard to the wage-earners in our towns, see p. 47 and Chap. XVII.

THE NEW MORALITY

their nature? What ideals and purposes are likely to guide their life and action? Have they naturally and morally any permanent and powerful sentiment for family and home? Those of us who set a high value on the building of a home as the loveliest and most fruitful of human arts, will regard it as a serious disparagement of women if the answer to this question be that they have no such sentiment, or at any rate that they have it in a degree so low that it is unable to compete with the desire for sexual freedom. Those who do not share our view of the family will deny that there is any disparagement.

In the New Morality very great emphasis is set on the revelation of woman's true nature which has followed the emancipation of women. Hitherto it was supposed that they were strongly attached to the home. But this is now seen to have been a misunderstanding. It is one of the points which seem "fairly certain" that feminism will destroy the family. Already "most women would very much prefer" to go out to work rather than stay at home and look after the children. There is often an actual "horror of the home." Moreover "the decay of inhibitions" has liberated "instinctive desires" in women which in all civilised countries are revolutionising sexual morality.⁸ These instinctive desires, in "uninhibited civilised people," are of a polygamous

character. Add that the new social freedom of women increases the "opportunities for conjugal infidelity," and it is easy to see that the liberation of women, moral and social, must accept the chief responsibility for the dissolution of the old kind of family life. There is in the real nature of women no principle of attachment to the home. The "modern feminist" at any rate has a very decided view. She does not wish to curtail the "vices" of men, but asks that women may have the same freedom as men.⁹ It may be thought that women have a natural desire for children which would attach them to the home, but here again emancipation has allowed them to be "honest about their own emotions."¹⁰ It has been supposed that women desire children more than men do, but the truth is "exactly the contrary";¹¹ and civilisation tends "greatly to diminish women's maternal feelings."¹²

People who care about the family will regard these expressions of opinion as disparaging not only to the natural character of women, but especially to the value of the emancipation of women. Whereas they had rejoiced at this emancipation of women, and especially at its liberation of a great new volume of public service, and in particular of social service devoted to the welfare of the family, they now learn from the New Morality that such rejoicing was out of place. The real effect of the emancipation

THE NEW MORALITY

has been to reveal to women themselves, and to bring into public operation, their congenital antipathy towards the ideals of family and home.

The matter may be put in a nutshell. The high morality of sex and the New Morality are entirely at one in seeing that the future relations of sex and the family depend above all upon the psychological and ethical character of women. They differ in their estimates of this character. The estimate upon which the New Morality relies is made clear by the following quotation: "It may become quite easily possible for women in the future, without any serious sacrifice of happiness, to select the fathers of their children by eugenic considerations, while allowing their private feelings free sway as regards ordinary sexual companionship."¹³ Thus psychology advises sociology on the human nature with which it has to deal. As he looks towards the future, the sociologist must not expect to find in the psychology of women any support for the institution of the family. The liberation of women has at last enabled them to know and say and be what they really are. It is at once a revelation and a revolution. Their true nature is inclined not to the life of wifehood and motherhood, but to "free sway for their feelings" as regards sexual relationships, or, as the vulgar would say, a career of "free love."

But to the high morality this estimate is a wanton disparagement of the nature of women and, in particular, of the effect of their liberation.

FEMINISM.

IF any of my readers wish to study the quality of modern feminism, they should not overlook *Margaret McMillan* by Albert Mansbridge (Dent, 6s., 1932). Those who buy this book are helping a good cause; all profits of author and publisher go to Miss McMillan's Camp School at Deptford. The author tells me that his heroine was convinced that all her efforts for children depended on the co-operation of the home.

That Margaret McMillan was a "feminist" (though a peaceful one) may be remembered by the fact that in 1913 she went on a deputation to the House of Commons to urge the repeal of the "Cat and Mouse" Act. She was thrown down in the crowd and trampled on and was laid up from her work for weeks.

No one in our time has done more for the children of the nation. "The movements of school baths, school feeding, medical inspection and clinical treatment for school-children, open-air schools, nursery-schools, and the training of a new generation of infant teachers were either created by her or given new meaning by her."

She was a highly cultivated woman who was encouraged to train for the stage and had served a apprenticeship in the society of the wealthy and fashionable. She turned away from this life to work and to fight for the workers. But she knew that the two worlds belonged to one world and that the existence of the poor "unfortunate" involves the whole cause of women. "Those who fight the battle of the workers . . . are the Saviours, not only of the slum girl but of all poor, wealthy Ladies Featherpoll."

The quality of Margaret McMillan's "feminism," i.e. of her emancipated womanhood, was passionately parental. Small-group nurture for children was her war-cry. Science was her ally in everything. She had that degree of spiritual

THE NEW MORALITY

culture and social purpose which can make mechanism its servant for good ends. Her aim was "the creation of a society that would make beautiful life possible for all." But everything would depend on the nurture of the child and ultimately all nurture would depend on parental responsibility in the home. This responsibility she encouraged in Deptford, so that many homes through her were made anew and continue after her death to rise up and call her blessed. She was an idealist, seeing children as "heirs of the ages" and speaking of the light shining above the place "where a young child lay." The first article in her creed of education was "I believe that all children are by nature clean." She resented a direction of society by which Great Powers have allowed the slum and have forced the child to be dirty. Help therefore was needed. Especially in regard to education, if you make demands on a child, you must see he is in a fit condition to respond to them. As a result of her work there are now in our schools nearly 15 million cleanliness-inspections every year! In her Nursery School at Deptford 80 per cent. of the children came suffering from rickets. The change is now astonishing and the newness of it may be seen from the fact that in 1908 there were only 3 clinics on record whereas now there are nearly 1,800 provided by L.E.A's. But here the story must be cut short. Suffice it to say that a high medical authority has declared her creation of the Nursery School to be the greatest single contribution to practical education in our time. When Margaret McMillan was a young woman there were hardly any avenues of public service open to women. Her work is the result of the Liberation of Women. Of the results of that liberation we see as yet only the very earliest fruitage. Once they are free to act, women start on the re-creation of the home and attack all social life in the spirit of parental care. Dr. Mansbridge concludes, "The real sources of her power were spiritual. Mystic, emotional, practical and intellectual, she moved in the ways of the scholar and the saint and so found satisfaction in the fellowship of the simple."

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| ¹ pp. 109-10. | ⁶ p. 132. | ¹¹ p. 159. |
| ² p. 112. | ⁷ p. 125. | ¹² p. 170. |
| ³ pp. 220-22. | ⁸ pp. 168-71. | ¹³ p. 211. |
| ⁴ p. 99. | ⁹ p. 69. | |
| ⁵ p. 128. | ¹⁰ p. 170. | |

CHAPTER XVI

AND OF CIVILISATION

THE New Morality celebrates the emancipation of women in such a way as to disparage the moral value of womanhood. It celebrates also the achievements of an advancing civilisation in such a way as practically to identify civilisation with the annihilation of value. This nihilism is shewn in its destructive influence upon the moral and social values of sex and the family, but it seems also to be made typical of the whole effect of civilisation. The argument is perfectly logical. It is rounded off by a prospect of the coming age, when a sex-life released from social purpose will find itself completely at home in a "civilisation" which has no social purpose at all. For by that time civilisation will be at the mercy of a "Science" that knows nothing either of value or of purpose.

Disparaging thoughts about civilisation are in the fashion to-day. Books and essays pour forth from the press in sharp criticism of our "scientific" or "mechanical" civilisation. But everything depends on how civilisation is defined. Perhaps it is best to define

THE NEW MORALITY

it as the way in which human life organises and appropriates its environment. For example, the control of certain elements of our inorganic environment enables the music of Beethoven to be heard by every fireside ; or again, it enables words of ancient beauty to be read by every villager. Wireless and printing are examples of a scientific civilisation : they are means which may be used either for or against the interests of æsthetic or moral culture. Civilisation in this sense means the control of environment : first of the inorganic environment which is studied by physics and chemistry, next of the organic environment that consists of sub-human animate creatures from the whale to the microbe, then of the impersonal social environment as when laws and institutions are moulded in the service of common life. But the intellectual power to control is not the same as the spiritual power to direct, and such civilisation has to call upon culture for the power of direction. It is this direction or guidance of the whole life of the community that is the aim of social purpose.

It seems best, therefore, to speak of culture as an appropriation of the higher meaning of life in the light of which civilisation, with all its wonderful achievements, may be directed to serve the development of personal and social life.

The process of civilisation began, we may

suppose, when the primitive group mastered, for its own use, certain elements of the environment. Every kind of life had been doing this from the beginning and had made itself a body and a home. Such a civilisation means the use of the environment by group-life in order to build a body for the life of the group. The process went on throughout the ages, producing fire and tools and other inventions. Its primary aim was the maintenance of common life. But, in and through the struggle for existence there grew up, sometimes quickly, sometimes very slowly and even with long pauses, another process which we may call the development of life.

This further process of developing the resources of life itself, the beginnings of art and science, the growth of a higher sort of morality and religion, the strengthening and refining of personal and social relationships, is watched by the philosophic historian as a revelation of the inner meaning and true direction of human life. It is always closely and fruitfully interwoven with the process of controlling environment for the maintenance of life. But the higher process of developing the character of life wins for itself a relative independence. It comes to its own when it acquires the power to direct the whole instrumental world in the service of the good, the beautiful and the true. Then, as Aristotle saw, the business of

THE NEW MORALITY

living rises to its true end or purpose, the business of living well.

The truth about modern scientific civilisation stares us in the face. The wealth of large-scale production, the vast impersonal organisations of commerce and industry, the multiplication of material means for transporting persons and goods and ideas, none of these need hurt, and most of them ought to help, the development of common life. If we are staggering about under the weight of our mechanical instruments like a child trying to swing a blacksmith's hammer, we ought not to blame it on our tools or on the men who make them. We ought rather to consider our failure to grow up to an adult capacity of social intelligence and social purpose.

The failure of international social purpose is too plain to need comment. There is not enough intelligence and goodwill to bring together the masses of wheat that are rotting in one hemisphere and the masses of humanity that are starving in another. There are plenty of fine ideas in the world about what ought to be done, and plenty of fine instruments to carry them out. But there is a weakness of soul in the world. The Great War is often put down to the sickness of European civilisation, but it was a symptom of sickness in the European soul. Compared to the high Middle Ages, our modern world has seemed to some observers

like the body of a giant with the social mind of a child. Everyone is familiar with this theme : and especially with the lament that, in the organisation of industry, the worker is kept out of touch with the inspiration of social purpose and becomes a cog in the machinery. We might add that the size of armaments in Europe is like the gross armature in pre-historic reptiles. Those monsters of little brain clad themselves in a coating of armour too cumbrous for their powers of self-adaptation to life ; and Europe may well be warned to remember the fate of the dinosaur.

It is no part of my aim to enlarge on this theme. But in any discussion of civilisation it seems necessary to distinguish the scientific process of controlling environment from the cultural process of developing the directive power of social purpose. Many thinkers of to-day are keenly conscious that the world suffers from sickness of social purpose. What then is to be done ? Are we tamely to acquiesce in the desperate expedient, now being tried in some lands, of an iron rule from above and a mass of quasi-mechanical atoms below. These human atoms are excommunicated from any living share in moral or social purpose. That is the business of the rulers : but *quis custodiet ipsos custodes ?*

We have passed beyond the stage when men and women can be content with a "theocratic"

THE NEW MORALITY

government from above, whether exercised in the name of religion or, as the New Morality suggests, in the name of science. The secularised revival of the old theocracy may be studied in Russia and Italy. The social welfare of the future depends not on mere environmental or governmental changes but on the moral education of the race, so that each individual may realise his membership in a common life and his share in its better development. At the centenary gathering of the British Association in 1931, a gathering representative of all departments of science, the President of the Educational Section took the opportunity to say that in his opinion it was the religious element in education that most of all needed attention. This opinion may be set side by side with a recent dictum of Professor Julian Huxley.*

“What man shall do with the new facts, the new ideas, the new opportunities of control which science is showering upon him does not depend upon science, but upon what man wants to do with them; and this in turn depends upon his scale of values. It is here that religion can become the dominant factor. For what religion can do is to set up a scale of values for conduct, and to provide emotional or spiritual driving force to help in getting them realised in practice.”

In dealing with a system of morality which regards religion as the dragon to be slain, there would be little use in discussing the part that might be played by it in supplying the crucial

* In *Science and Religion* (Howe, 3s. 6d.), see pp. 18-19.

need of modern life for a clearer and stronger social direction. But we need only note, in passing, the widespread conviction that *some* remedy is needed for the sickness of social purpose. In other countries the need grows more acute than in our own.

A friend has just returned from a visit to a huge cosmopolitan city on the other side of the Atlantic. Its excesses of robbery and murder are known to all the world, but he tells me that the local newspapers shew the real state of things to be far worse than is given in the reports which cross the ocean. He says that he could not have a meal in a restaurant without being visited by grown men who came in to beg a bit of his bread. There is economic trouble, but the worst of the trouble is moral. We have no need to dwell on the definite illegalities, such as the phenomenal number of cases of rape or of police-protected brothels. It must suffice to say that, beyond these illegalities, the ideal of sexual freedom seems to be realised on a very unusual scale. But the most remarkable news that my friend brought home was the fact that for the last eighteen months the schoolteachers of that city have received no pay. That, I think, is a clear verification of what is meant by the New Morality when it asserts that "civilisation" tends to reduce parental feeling. Otherwise the City Fathers could never bear to be guilty of such neglect of those who have care of the children.

THE NEW MORALITY

We need not accept the fatalism of Spengler if we pay tribute to his insight in describing the modern world-city. The cosmopolitan herd detached from the traditions of family, neighbourhood and fatherland, is very difficult for any authority to manage. Its social conditions are only too favourable towards the modern version of a herd-morality. In our own country the reformers are trying to counteract the tendency towards herd-life. But in all the principal countries of the modern world there are great cities where social life is in danger of corruption. Kipling's man has no need to go to the Far East to find a social order where there are no Ten Commandments and a man can raise a thirst and indulge the rest of his desires entirely regardless of social purpose. But it seems altogether unfair to put the blame for the decay of religion, of the family, of a high valuation of sex, of parental feeling, and so forth, on a scientific or mechanical civilisation. The trouble with some of these cities is that they are dying from the top. The disease is not scientific, but moral. There is a collapse of moral authority and of social purpose. Any one desire is as good as any other. There is no criterion of desires and no philosophy of moral culture which wins the respect of the citizens.

I am aware that such remarks as these may easily incur the charge of being old-fashioned moralisings. The "new" morality rejoices in

its freedom to revise the Decalogue. We have noted* one of its suggestions. In order to help people to keep the Sixth Commandment, which is traditionally interpreted to forbid "malevolence and hate," it is proposed to set them free from the Seventh. This "freedom" is based upon a denial of the principle that underlies the whole Decalogue, the principle that there exists a moral and social purpose for mankind which has rights superior to the rights of impulse.

I am sure the point is true, that the chief responsibility lies not with those whose energies are devoted to the scientific advance of civilisation, but with all of us who in any way are concerned in the task of teaching by word or by pen. Let us take a striking example. The city of Chicago has won notoriety by the way in which many of its citizens openly disregard the ancient precepts of the Decalogue. It is known that all is not well with this city and its government is reported to be signally corrupt. There is a collapse of social direction and purpose.

But Chicago is celebrated also for a powerful school of thinkers and writers who proclaim that moral values or ideals have no more claim to validity or reality than they get from their occurrence in our minds. There is no high social purpose for mankind which can claim

* See p. 212 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

to be rooted in the nature of reality. They have slain the dragon which guards the door, but they have lost the key of the door which leads to the golden age.

These things are clearly put by a careful and charitable American writer* who has given to this moral philosophy the title of "Chicago pragmatism." He considers that it has been reserved for an English writer to give the most apt expression of its fundamental principles: "The only contemporary philosophy which seems to me to express the very essence" of Chicago pragmatism "is that of Mr. Bertrand Russell." The Professor quotes from this source a few illustrative sentences, such as, "It is we who create values, and our desires which confer value. In this realm we are kings, and we debase our kingship if we bow down to Nature" or, of course, to any moral purposes not created by ourselves.

It would be absurd to imagine that either the author of these sentences or the philosophers whom he has so skilfully interpreted would approve of the way in which certain citizens of Chicago carry into practice this doctrine of kingship in the realm of value. But the philosophy itself appears to reach a height of human self-confidence which has never been touched before, and it is not easy to see how it contains any

* Professor Horton, of Oberlin College, in his *Theism and the Modern Mood* (S.C.M.).

medicine for the diseased condition of social purpose.

I do not think it to be only a question of words if we shift the responsibility for a collapse of *social* purpose, if there be any such, from the shoulders of a "scientific civilisation" to the shoulders of a social philosophy which is bankrupt in the currency of *moral* purpose. A favourite device of the New Morality is to emphasise modern elements of social decay and to attribute them to the influence of civilisation. This, I think, is a disparagement of civilisation and unjust. A scientific civilisation is no more responsible for the devaluation of sex than it is for the devaluation of sterling. These devaluations are due to a malady of social and not of scientific thought and power, and especially to the lack of faith and nerve in those who are supposed to supply the world with its social philosophy and with its moral education both for young and old.

Meanwhile, every here and there, good social purpose is trying to get a footing in our modern world. May I give one example? A friend of mine has just retired from business. For many years he has had plenty of money; but he continued in business not to make more money but to establish a concern in which business should be conducted in a way that was consistent with the dictates of moral and social culture. He chose this alternative as being,

THE NEW MORALITY

on the whole, a more useful thing to do than to carry out his other ambition, that of giving the rest of his life to public work for his city. Thus he built up a great business, in which both factory-workers and office-workers were treated as human beings. They were kept in touch with the common purpose of the whole undertaking. They were provided with excellent facilities for recreation and education in their leisure. Much energy and intelligence were given to the task of clothing the mechanism of industry with the flesh and blood of social welfare and development.

The business, however, was, at a certain turn of events, and no doubt for very good reasons, amalgamated with a large combine: and, to cut a long story short, the time came when the controlling powers decided that the mechanism of business must be stripped of its human clothing. My friend then retired from business in favour of his alternative ambition. The disappointment was a source of grief, but the brave enterprise will not be fruitless.

What happened in this case is an extreme example of what is called "rationalisation" in business. It had the effect of insulating an important activity of human life from the influence of social culture and purpose.

At a juncture of time when men and women are conscious, in a special degree, of the need for enlightening and reinforcing social purpose

so that it may be intelligent enough and powerful enough to control for good ends all the mechanisms of civilisation and all the impulses of humanity, it is strange that we should be offered a New Morality which has no other aim than to cut sex free from subordination to the interests of social purpose. Thus the method of "rationalisation" is applied to sex as it sometimes is to business. In regard to sex it succeeds, as we have seen, just as the superstitious view of sex succeeds, in the serious devaluation of its object.

There is, however, some advantage in having a clear formulation of the argument that more freedom for impulse and not more strength of social purpose is the true way of life. Those who so clearly formulated the nineteenth century economic policy of *laissez-faire* helped people to realise what was meant by cutting loose from social control the industrial operation of the acquisitive impulse. So, too, those who clearly formulate the policy of *laissez-faire* in regard to the impulse of sex, help us to see where we stand.

No one can evade the challenge of the New Morality to make up his mind whether or no he means to vote for the family or for free sex. We cannot have both. That has been placed beyond dispute by the logic of the New Morality.

The alienation of sex from the sphere of

THE NEW MORALITY

social ethics cannot, I submit, with any show of justice be put down to the account of a scientific civilisation. But the disparagement of civilisation is only one example of a type of philosophy which sounds like the echo of an ancient classic of luxurious despair: Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher, all is vanity.

A doctrine of primitive man which belittles what is fine in our inheritance from the animals: a theory of the family which explains its origin as a barbarism and its decay as a moral liberation: a psychology which finds nothing in the mind, even in the mind of children, to which goodness can appeal: an ethic of sex which discards the element of permanent devotion: a morality of marriage which demands an open mind for the approaches of adulterous desire: an estimate of motherhood which assumes that women could as easily cast off their motherhood as they cast off an old shoe: a philosophy of politics which regards it as dominated by the love of money and of power: a vision of the future State as coming under an aimless tyranny of science: a philosophy of poetry and art which finds the spur of all æsthetic creation* in the sting of unsatisfied sex: a philosophy of science which allows not its claim to be moved by love of truth: taken all together these disparagements seem

* See above p. 202 on art and courtship, and see *Marriage and Morals*, page 60 and 61, on Shelley: "It was the obstacles to his desires that led him to write poetry" and "from the point of view of the arts it is certainly regrettable when women are too accessible."

deliberately calculated to reduce the ideals of mankind to vanity.

Thus, by a thousand hints and suggestions, by many half-truths and some plain untruths, all of them logically controlled to one end, the goodness of life is depreciated. In particular, this disquisition on *Marriage and Morals* pre-celebrates the obsequies of marriage, registers without lament the demise of morality, and prophesies for our consolation a heaven on earth of unlimited sexual freedom.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

THE New Morality is offered to us as containing a message of hope for amendment.¹ In order to see whether this promise has been realised let us glance at its sociological forecast. Here the power of a scientific civilisation to depress certain values of social life is viewed as clearing a way for sexual freedom. The author is not really happy at having to let the beauty and value of the family go, but the task of reconciling this beauty and value with his axiom that sex should be free turns out to be beyond his power.

The social forecast of the New Morality is based upon the belief that in capitalistic countries the family may survive only among the rich, though in Russia it may survive among the uncivilised peasants.² In the former countries "the family is more stable among the well-to-do than among the wage-earners."³ The rich, however, may be abolished by Socialism. It is therefore "far from improbable" that the bi-parental family will completely disappear, and "if mothers are at all of a promiscuous disposition, fatherhood may be impossible to determine."⁴

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

It is clear that this forecast depends upon an unflattering estimate of the psychology and morality of those who are not "the rich," i.e. the wage-earning classes. In particular the institution of fatherhood is marked down for extinction. The modern wage-earning father is a fit successor to the original patriarchal exploiters of children. But his nefarious operations have been pulled up by the Factory Acts. There was a time when a father could make money out of small children by sending them into factories "until they died of over-work."⁵ Now that fathers cannot have children on the former cruel terms, will they trouble to have any children? "There is much to be said for the view that the average man in all ages has had as many children as it paid him to have, no more and no less."⁶

Not much more can be said for the wage-earning mother. She often has a horror of the home. Modern feminism is teaching women to be their real selves. They will "probably" refuse to bear children unless they can make money out of it and will not care to rear children unless they are paid for it. The widespread revolt of women and the devices which make it easy to dissociate sex from the duties of family-life have snapped the bonds of all restraint. The only way to save the existence of the family is to adopt the New Morality. From this we may gather a hope that some men and women, moved by a high

THE NEW MORALITY

sense of political duty, may consent to marry and have children. It will be for the sake of duty and not for the sake of "love": for this can find vent in other ways.

But, beyond the psychological conditions of an "advancing civilisation," there are political and economic conditions which undermine the whole moral of the family. Consider the heavy blows received by the family at the hands of the State. The State undertakes the feeding, the schooling, the police protection, and the medical and dental care of the children, thus replacing the father in his traditional office of protection and maintenance. This tendency to interfere with the function of the father is on the increase. Clearly he is doomed and will soon be eliminated.⁷ Political action will complete what psychology alone has so nearly achieved, the dissolution of the bi-parental family.

But why, we may ask, should so gloomy a view be taken of the influence of modern "social services" on the family? It is easy to take a very different view unless we have made up our mind that the family is doomed. As to the feeding of necessitous children, why should it break up the family because it is done in a school and not in a monastery? As to free education, does not any social worker know how much it has added to the interest of the home and how proud the father is when his

child does well at school? Even an elementary education develops individuality and raises the standard of common life in the home just as it does elsewhere. Nor does the office of the father suffer much dangerous rivalry from the ministry of healing. Surely the existence of the family cannot be at stake just because the father is no longer the family doctor or no longer pays direct the fees of his children's doctor. We know that the argument runs the other way; for our friends, the social workers, meet the fathers as well as the mothers at the babies' clinic, and tell us how the good work of doctors and nurses brings a new light to their minds. If the mother alone takes baby to the clinic, no one so keen as father to hear what he weighed this week. The modern wage-earning father is not a mere jealous and tyrannical brute. We are told, with a touch of sympathy that is rare in the New Morality, how sometimes, of a Sunday, fathers are to be seen playing with their children on the doorstep, but it is added that this "play-relation" is "without serious importance."⁸

We do not forget, however, that the police have replaced the father in "protecting" the child. Nor can I ever forget how much the police desired that the father should come home from the war, or how the Home Office was at its wits' end to deal with the epidemic of juvenile offences when father was away. The Home Office had probably never heard of the

THE NEW MORALITY

“admirable” system of discipline in vogue among the Trobriand Islanders whereby the children are kept in order by an absentee uncle.

As we follow the author in this prophetic mood, we must not forget that the whole forecast rests upon his notion of the psychology of the wage-earning classes. I do not know where the experience was gained on which this notion is based, but as I look back on years of work in close touch with the wage-earners, with men and women of Trade Unions and Friendly Societies, and with a corps of experienced social workers in a great English city, I can only record that my memory retains a very different impression of the wage-earners’ attitude towards the family.*

The Social Prospect, as seen by the New Morality in the light of an advancing civilisation, is largely dominated by Science, in its application to the problems of population, both as to quantity and as to quality. First as to quantity, the “increase of mankind” as it is often called.⁹ In this country, we read, scientific and unscientific methods of birth-control have reduced the birth-rate to half what it was fifty years ago. The danger is that the decline may continue and may lead to the extinction of the “most civilised races.” It may therefore be necessary to make parent-

* On the artisan, see p. 47 above.

hood a paying business. But then comes a new danger; for military nations may wrest this new business of payment to their own advantage by an excessive production of cannon fodder. A solution may have therefore to be found in the establishment of an International Government which would ration the birth-rate of each subordinate community.

So much for quantity in the increase of mankind. As regards quality, it is the aim of Eugenics to "encourage desirable parents to have a large number of children." Any thorough application of scientific breeding would require that the State should select from each generation "two or three per cent. of its males and some twenty-five per cent. of its females for the purpose of propagation."¹⁰ There is no actual prophecy that this state of affairs is going to come about, nor is it represented as an attractive ideal, but we are warned it may come about, and it dovetails very neatly into the stage of civilisation which we have been already led to regard as imminent. For example, as we have already noted, "it may become quite easily possible for women in the future without any serious sacrifice of happiness to select the fathers of their children by eugenic considerations, while allowing their private feelings free sway as regards ordinary sexual companionship."¹¹

We have seen that, inspired by a horror of

the home, working women may prefer not to rear their own children, but to go back, after a brief period of salaried child-bearing, to their ordinary wage-earning and leave their children to the care of the State. By the time we have reached the discussion of Eugenics it is almost superfluous to observe what a "flood of light" it throws on the psychology of maternity, and on the ease with which women could acquiesce in the dissolution of the family.

We have heard already that Science is to occupy the seat of authority which will be vacated by Religion. Society may support Eugenics by its sanctions of praise and blame. The State may support it by paying those who obey and fining those who rebel against the eugenic organisation of birth-control. It is not a happy prospect. But though Science springs from love of power and has no authority as to values and purposes,¹² yet, "if there is to be a tyranny it is better that it should be scientific."¹³ Religion, the former guide to purpose, and Parental Feeling, the former inspiration of "great statesmen," having been worn away by civilisation, the conclusion is only too clear: there will be no spring of high purpose left, and, as in ancient days, it will be for him who can to grasp the reins of tyranny.

Such then is the drift of civilisation. The drift could be arrested if men and women were convinced of the value of the family and resolved

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

to fight for it. But that would be to make sacrifice of the axiom of irresponsible sex-life. The idol cannot be sacrificed to the family. The family must be offered to the idol, and civilisation plays the part of the mechanic slave that pushes and edges the victim towards the altar of sacrifice.

In fine, the sexual freedom which was celebrated in the story of the Trobriand Islanders will be at last restored by the advance of civilisation. Indeed, there may be taken a step beyond the point which has been reached by these islanders. For the function of the mother may be reduced to her merely physical function of child-bearing. Not only will no one know who his father is, but, if children are taken from their mother at the birth, no one will know what it is to have a mother of his own. But in any case the bi-parental family will have disappeared and the father will be "of no more importance than among cats and dogs."¹⁴ Fathers (and mothers) are likely to have "no such personal relations to their children" as in the past. "The seriousness and high social purpose which moralists in the past have attached to marriage will, if the world becomes more scientific in its ethics, attach only to procreation."¹⁵ The divorce between the family and social purpose will become absolute. The dispositions that have been fostered by fatherhood, motherhood,

THE NEW MORALITY

sonship, brotherhood, may have been in the past the means of holding society together: but they have lost their vitality and their work will be done by the State, under the sole inspiration of Science. But the way will be free and open for complete and universal sexual freedom.

It is odd to find, in this curious blend of cynicism and "romance," a reference to the "welfare of posterity." Moral philosophers have exalted the virtue of caring for future generations. Hitherto the family has been the only known power which could persuade the average man to have any such care. The problem is recognised by the New Morality. Having upset conscience from its throne, and having disposed of the family, where are we to look for its solution? The answer is, in the State. Usually it has been supposed that the State and its Law lag somewhat behind the conscience of the community and that Law can never cover the whole ground, and can certainly never touch the higher ground of morality nor reach its deeper springs. But in the New Morality the State becomes the substitute not only for fatherhood and motherhood, but also for conscience. It is to take this matter of the "welfare of posterity" off the hands of the family and to organise it through a Procreation Office backed by the Treasury.¹⁶ The State is to determine what kind of children

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

ought to be born ; to pay those who produce them, and to fine those who produce a less desirable type.

The State, therefore, by utilising the acquisitive interest will see that the right sort of children are born. There remains the problem of rearing the children. Hitherto women have reared the children for love and in a way that only love can do. But this cannot be expected in future, even if the mothers are paid for it. The State will have to step in again and look after the children in public nurseries. By a curious freak of human nature women who are *not* mothers will be found to take care of them in their nurseries, if properly paid. But the children will have to suffer. Brought up in public institutions they "will tend to be all alike."

The prospect is not cheering : still less when we consider the inner meaning of a State-regulated procreation for the sake of the "welfare of posterity." The aim of eugenic breeding is defined as the encouragement of good stocks and the discouragement of bad stocks. This aim is to be guided by two assumptions : (a) that some people are born cleverer than others, (b) that "clever people are preferable to their opposite," which is admitted to be "dubious."¹⁷ So the great phrase, "the welfare of posterity," means progress in cleverness, and the "high social purpose" once attached to the family is

THE NEW MORALITY

reduced to the "dubious" end of procreation in the interests of cleverness.

It may be convenient at this point to glance at the way in which *The Scientific Outlook** continues and completes the social forecast of *Marriage and Morals*. Here we find nothing left save the *dissecta membra* of the family. Sex has become a mechanical toy. But there is a "moral idealism" which can rise above natural instinct.

'The State is now settled in its supremacy. Scientific breeding takes the place of the family. The citizens are filled with a sense of remarkable achievement and moral idealism. There is no trouble with "natural affection," so long as men and women are free to find pleasure in merely "physical sex." The passage must be quoted†: "Wherever remarkable achievements are possible and are at the same time such as to satisfy men's moral idealism, the love of power is capable of swallowing up the instinctive life of the affections, especially if an outlet is permitted to purely physical sexual impulses." Here sex has reached its lowest level. In the New Morality it was to be accompanied, ideally, by *some* "psychological element," though room should be made for its occasional exercise in ways free from "psychological obligations." But now this psychological "freedom" has

* By Bertrand Russell (Allen & Unwin, 1931). See Appendix A.
† *The Scientific Outlook*, p. 261 f.

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

become normal.* In order to destroy any chance of "social importance" in the exercise of sex, all but a few, both of men and women, will be sterilised. The divorce of sex and parenthood, an indispensable operation of the New Morality, may—so we read—reach its consummation by the device of artificial impregnation. "The sentiment of paternity would thus disappear completely" and "maternal sentiment would have little chance to develop."

Thus the process of the devaluation, desocialisation, devitalisation of sex which we have watched in *Marriage and Morals* is carried to its logical conclusion in *The Scientific Outlook*. It is true that in the later book the author raises a protest against the general diminution of values by a mechanical civilisation. The villain of the piece is no longer the paterfamilias, but the master of applied science. But the protest is made on behalf of æsthetic rather than of social values. No point is taken about the ruin of the family. That, we have been assured, was already in process of being dissolved by civilisation long before the scientific age. Its collapse is not among the counts which the author brings against the mechanical type of civilisation. Seeing, however, that the discipline of the family over sex has been removed,

* In *Marriage and Morals*, page 103, the author protests against the sexual grossness of the social groups studied by Mr. Aldous Huxley. Here, however, he seems to consider that such moral imbecility of sex life may be combined with a form of moral idealism.

THE NEW MORALITY

the consequent trivialisation of sex is duly exhibited. It is also noted, as in the earlier book, that "the most intelligent classes in the most scientific nations are dying out."

What are we to say about this Social Prospect of the New Morality? Obviously that it is based on a caricature of scientific civilisation.* But if, indeed, the family and all its sentiments were to be wiped out of existence, and if human nature became, as it is alleged to be already, devoid of any natural morality and incapable of social culture, then the life of personality and of society might easily be mechanised. But the springs of human faith and purpose are not yet quite frozen up.

One point is perhaps worth special mention. The assurance that the family is dying depends, as we have said, on a certain estimation of the wage-earners' psychology. For example, the wage-earning father is held to be ready to accept himself as a useless anachronism and the wage-earning mother to regard her motherhood as a function outworn. But this estimate seems based on reports about life and character in Soviet Russia rather than on any knowledge of the wage-earning class in this country. Just as I was reading for the first time about the New Morality, I happened to see a report of the annual meeting of the Trade Union Congress.†

* See Chapter XVI above, which was written before I had read the attack on Civilisation in *The Scientific Outlook*.

† *The Times* (September 6th, 1930).

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

A proposal was brought forward that the State should pay the family for the maintenance of every child. But the Congress rejected this proposal that the State should so directly lay its hand upon the home. They considered that the collective wisdom of the community could help the family best by improving the "social services." Whatever, therefore, be the right or wrong of Family Allowances, it is a mistake to ignore the attitude of the British Socialists towards the family. This was made clear enough twenty years ago by the present Prime Minister, who, in those days at any rate, was regarded by no one as the mere slave of tradition. He wrote :* "The idea that Socialism is opposed to the family organisation is absurd." As to the economic independence of women, he considered that it would go far to secure their proper treatment. As to the social services, he thought that "a more ample co-operation between the State as a health authority and the home" would be all to the good. But "the barrack school" and the "State nursery" were to be avoided. As to home-life, "the personal touch and affection of the mother, the surroundings and ethics of a small community, the sense of continuity which comes to the maturing child's mind" were all invaluable. Indeed so "inseparable" was the family from a complete State organisation that he could

* *Socialism*, by Ramsay MacDonald (T. C. & E. C. Jack).

THE NEW MORALITY

imagine the Socialist State "declining altogether to recognise divorce."*

Before leaving this matter of the wage-earning classes, we must consider a striking illustration of the mind of the New Morality towards "freedom," an illustration which touches very closely the honour of those classes. It has to do with the loathsome social disease which is called prostitution. There are women who sell themselves for money to casual men. I do not think any one would dare to accuse British Labour of a readiness to acquiesce in the existence of prostitution. Karl Marx uses its existence as a stick with which to beat the bourgeois. He assumes that the evil is due to the brutal advantage by which bourgeois men are able to hold at their mercy poverty-stricken women and girls of the proletariat. "Our bourgeois, not content with having the wives and daughters of the proletarians at their disposal, not to speak of common prostitutes, take the greatest pleasure in seducing each other's wives."† Thus even Marx, the idol of the Soviet, stood far from the acquiescence with which the New Morality regards adultery and prostitution.

What then is this attitude of acquiescence?

* This attitude towards sex and family is shared by an unmarried son of the present Prime Minister, also an M.P.: "I think the ideal is a life-long marriage between two equal and compatible partners, and continence before marriage. To believe this is not old-fashioned, it is wisdom." (*Daily Herald*, March 31st, 1931.)

† Quoted by MacDonald.

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

It is based on the "difficulty" of continence, which is realised both by husband and wife when they are away from each other for some time. It is a pity that they should be restrained by any idea of loyalty from indulging at such times in "temporary fancies."¹⁸ Men who are away from their wives on journeys are "not content to remain continent." Sailors ashore after a long voyage "cannot be expected" to be thus content.¹⁹ The question of prostitution, therefore, is to be decided by what can be expected of men and women. Even if they are married it seems that you cannot expect very much.

How then is it possible to build, on such expectations, a *morality* of these temporary fancies? The answer is that, though these fancies may not be wholly approved, yet the disapproval must not be pressed too far lest "love" should "become very difficult." Here once more we touch bed-rock in the dogma of absolute sexual freedom. Morality must regard these temporary fancies with unconcern. But in order to provide for them, it is obvious that there must be men and women who are willing to satisfy them only because they are paid for it. True, it is "one of the great advantages to be hoped for from the sexual liberation of women" that men may now have recourse to women who do not require to be paid for their favours.²⁰ But the argument concludes that prostitution cannot be

THE NEW MORALITY

wholly abolished. Besides sailors and travellers, there are, for example, all the men who are "unhappy in their marriages" and who will desire other gratification "in a form as free from psychological obligation as possible."²¹ The New Morality must be comprehensive enough to make room for all such needs. Therefore, prostitution, though admittedly not in its existing form a desirable institution, must be allowed to remain. But it must be made respectable; as it is, for example, in Japan, where this career is "even adopted at the instance of parents" and is "even a not uncommon method of earning a marriage dowry."²²

This, however, is a suggestion which no one would think of offering to the bourgeois parent; for the deliberate adoption of so hateful a life could be recommended by parent to child only, if ever, as an alternative to sheer starvation. It could only be made, therefore, as a suggestion to the poorer parents of the proletariat, a suggestion suitable enough perhaps for the wage-earning parents as they are depicted in the New Morality, but very dangerous for any one to offer to the wage-earning father or mother of real life.

I do not think my readers will expect me to enlarge on this topic. Obviously the cruel and inhuman traffic must be fought. However great the power of the enemy, any policy of defeatism would be the last dishonour.

THE SOCIAL FORECAST OF THE NEW MORALITY

The requirements of freedom seem to be absolute. For example, we are forbidden, in the name of Freedom, to set any limit upon the commercial exploitation of even grossly obscene publications.²³ There must be no restraint of books or pictures which make money by the most vulgar forms of sex-appeal. This devotion to freedom also prescribes a very hostile attitude towards those who oppose the White Slave Traffic. It is quite inconceivable that any decent human being should take up such an attitude after reading the hideous and sickening evidence on this traffic, collected and published by the League of Nations. The trade means foul murder of helpless girls body and soul. But we find that the New Morality denounces those who fight the traffic as being, first, victims of hysteria and, secondly, hypocrites who are really aiming all the time at "voluntary and decent extra-marital relations."²⁴

We have now traced to the end the story of sex and the family as viewed by the New Morality and as put forward under the great name of Freedom. The challenge was made to the sociologist that he should find room in his social outlook for the freedom of romantic love. Though love should contain a "psychological" as well as a "physical element"²⁵, yet "sex intercourse divorced from love" is not to be prohibited, lest love also should become difficult.²⁶ Such "love" is to be regarded as

THE NEW MORALITY

free from any social restraint, either before or after marriage, and to be relieved from any sense of duty towards constructive social purpose such as is involved in its traditional relation to the family. The necessities of romantic freedom require license for sexual promiscuity. The result of this doctrine is recorded without flinching in the social forecast of the two books that lie before us. It brings about the devaluation and the trivialisation of the sacred and creative function of sex and the decay and death of the family. It brushes lightly to one side the high morality which sees in sex an essential purpose of true love, whereby an enduring devotion is given from person to person and from life to life.

The author of *Marriage and Morals* held out the promise that his account of the New Morality would end on a note of hope. It is hard to see how the conclusion of the matter could inspire any human creature with hope. Surely there must be some better way to "idealise the love of man and woman" and to shew how it "should be a tree whose roots are deep in the earth but whose branches extend into heaven."²⁷

References to *Marriage and Morals* :

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| ¹ p. 16. | ¹⁰ pp. 207-8. | ¹⁹ p. 116, 118. |
| ² p. 166. | ¹¹ p. 211. | ²⁰ p. 123. |
| ³ p. 164. | ¹² p. 233. | ²¹ p. 119. |
| ⁴ p. 148. | ¹³ p. 214. | ²² p. 120. |
| ⁵ p. 141. | ¹⁴ p. 169. | ²³ p. 94. |
| ⁶ p. 141. | ¹⁵ p. 213. | ²⁴ pp. 14, 225. |
| ⁷ pp. 167, 240. | ¹⁶ p. 213. | ²⁵ p. 96. |
| ⁸ p. 144. | ¹⁷ p. 201. | ²⁶ p. 103. |
| ⁹ ch. xvii & xviii. | ¹⁸ p. 182. | ²⁷ p. 224. |

CHAPTER XVIII

A BETTER HOPE

SUCH is the *Werterdämmerung* of the New Morality, the waning twilight of values. In the end, the family has all but disappeared and the values of sex have vanished. "Civilisation" and "science" have done their work. There is nothing in human nature strong enough to resist them.

If we may allow ourselves one last word in criticism of this social prophecy, it shall be that its underlying philosophy is a revival of the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes in an age which has long outgrown it.

Hobbes was not a man of action. He was a scientist and a thinker, and master of a strong English style. He had been deeply shaken by the civil wars of the Commonwealth period, as some of our modern thinkers have been shaken by the great European war. He was led to take a low view of human nature. It is now nearly three hundred years since he propounded the mechanistic psychology which is still in some vogue to-day. As Eucken wrote of him, he "rid the soul, no less than the State, of all inwardness of life and wholeness of conception."

THE NEW MORALITY

The soul of man he considered to be moved by one great motive, "a perpetual and restless desire for power after power." The desire for power seemed to him so completely to fill the mind of man that there was no room in it for moral impulses of love and trust, or for any elements that could join with others to knit the social bond. Strangely enough, he saw in the animals a natural principle of "agreement," but he found none in mankind. *The natural state of man was a freedom of anarchy.* Hence a life of confusion and despair, only to be saved from ruin by the expedient of setting up an Absolute Power, which was solely concerned to stop men from interfering with each other. The logic was secure. If the individuals cared for nothing but power, they could only be controlled by Superior Power. It is idle to talk of a morality of the State when there is no morality of the individual.

These thoughts of Hobbes are clearly reflected in the thought of the New Morality. There is the same mechanistic psychology : * the same anarchy in the soul : the same dominance of the motive of power : the same vision of the State as a Power-State, made even more gloomy and forbidding by a mechanical conception of civilisation and by the autocracy of Science : the same disinclination to see in the soul of man any natural capacity for moral and social purpose.

* See Appendix A.

A BETTER HOPE

Let us now turn away from a moral and political theory which is based on so low a view of the resources of human nature. It is a view which fits the loose and unstable individualism of the over-urbanised herd, but no other form of social life to-day. Let us consider a very different way of looking at human nature. Here, I think, we shall find reason for the better hope. It is the view of the social worker that life, individual and social, may and ought to be developed by a process of integration. It is the vocation of the social worker to serve and help this development. He could not go on with his work if he believed that in human nature there is no building material and no binding material for a better social order.

On this point of human psychology we shall do wisely to interrogate those who have not only *thought* about human nature, but have also *worked* with and for it. Let us see, for example, what is the testimony of such a distinguished social thinker and worker as Mr. Graham Wallas.*

Mr. Wallas considers that the very existence of the Great Society depends upon the leadership of men and women who have a steady desire for the good of others. This desire or Love or Public Spirit is the only thing which can enable them to go on with their constructive work in the face of its normal accompaniments

* See *The Great Society* (Macmillan), recognised as a book of much authority.

of drudgery, disappointment and uncertainty of result.

But this Love is not confined to a few extraordinary people. It belongs to the original endowment of humanity. It was *given* from the start. It springs up naturally from several dispositions that were "evolved in our human and pre-human ancestors." The dispositions that "produced disinterested Love" were (a) parental, (b) sexual, (c) fraternal, (d) general. This "general" desire for the good of others, often no doubt weak and vague, extends to the good of members of the tribe or of the human species as such.*

On this social psychology I will venture one or two comments. First, it means that the principle of *active and emotive care for the good of others* is native to the constitution of mankind. Such a principle relieves the philosopher from the need of inventing a social motive or from trying to compound it, in a chemical manner, from "simpler" elements of individualism or hedonism. The shuttle that weaves the social bond was a birthday present from Nature to Man.

Secondly, the social worker could never acquiesce in the dissolution of the family or in the devaluation and trivialisation of sex. The

* It is an interesting, if minor, question whether this is not really an outgrowth of the deeply-rooted fraternal instinct, the love of kind growing out from the love of kin. Also the writer's "instinct" of Loyalty or Following the Lead may be an outgrowth of the filial instinct.

A BETTER HOPE

love that sex and family generate is the love that buildeth up, the love that can see possibilities and help them to the birth, the love that is more than an emotion or an imaginative vision, for it is also, in its full and proper development, a steady and patient devotion of the will towards mate or child, or brother, or friend, and towards the best in each that is yet to be: a love which, trained by the great sentiment of family, is made ready to spread abroad to neighbourhood and beyond.

When Mr. Wallas quotes Bishop Butler to the effect that there are "indications in human nature that we were made for society and to do good," he approves the statement, but prefers to ignore the teleology. He is engaged on a psychological enquiry and carefully refers to philosophy the question of ends. But he warns those who are in the possession of power, and notably those writers of books and plays who are "leaders of young opinion," that they may create nothing but confusion and weakness unless their "power is related to some greater purpose in whose service is liberty."

But however we read these "indications," it makes a great difference to our view of life whether we hold that at the original birth of mankind and at the birth of every normal child to-day there was and is some *given* capacity for social good, or whether, on the other hand, we think that both in primitive man and in the young child

THE NEW MORALITY

to-day, the soul is mainly occupied with vanity and the love of power. The more hopeful view accords with an act of faith in an underlying purposive tendency towards higher and fuller life in animal evolution and in human history, and I think this act of faith to be in harmony with science and philosophy.* From the point of view of the social worker such a faith is the ground of better hope. It does not imply any *necessity* of development, but a purposive capacity and tendency towards good social life. The amazing amount of divagation from any clear line of development, and the no less amazing amount of degeneration in the history of individuals and of nations, is enough to shew how great a need there is at every stage of human history for a strong and clear-sighted individual and social purpose.

May I ask my readers to go with me a little further in this? If there are any who are confused at the present time by the babel of social speculations and especially of speculations about sex and the family; or any who are bored with the conditions of their life and liable to plunge into devious ways in order to seek the *feeling* of self-realisation and self-satisfaction, I think they could

* According to a very careful philosopher who died this year (1931) (Professor Pringle Pattison), "philosophy stands or falls with the possibility of discovering a reasonable end or meaning in the universe." For the opinions of philosophers and scientists who agree that the hope of such a discovery is not entirely vain, see a popular booklet, *Science and Religion* (Howe, 3s. 6d.), and for a collection of opinions on religion given by 200 Fellows of the Royal Society, see *The Religion of Scientists* (Benn, 2/6), edited by C. L. Drawbridge.

A BETTER HOPE

hardly do better than to keep in touch not only with speculations but also with the practical work of men and women who are engaged in helping personal and social life to develop.

The modern company of social workers is typical of much that is best and deepest in our moral culture. Whatever social faith they have, they are living and working in it, not merely thinking about it or talking about it. Their touch with scientific method distinguishes them from the workers of the past, rich as the fruits have been of the ancient work of "charity." This union of science with goodwill, of trained thought with trained work, may be regarded as a new phenomenon in the history of mankind.*

Among this company of workers we observe that the forces of "science" and "civilisation" are regarded, not as enemies of good life but as aids to the development of good life. They are used as the instruments of a generous activity of "parental" love and wisdom. The workers agree that their best hopes for social service depend on the co-operation of the family and on the growth of more goodness and wisdom within the family.† There are many spheres in this world of "social service"; for example, the medical profession, the teaching profession, the officers of a variety of municipal and

* See the valuable Introduction of the new *Encyclopædia of the Social Sciences* (Macmillan), where it is noted that the influence of social work on the writing of history shows the way the wind blows to-day.

† See p. 47 above.

THE NEW MORALITY

charitable institutions. In every case round the "professional" core there revolves an auxiliary body of voluntary helpers. The inhabitants of these spheres of service greet each other as friends. They are members of a fellowship which crosses every frontier and joins hands across the seas. They see in each other's eyes, when they meet, the light of a common hope. In their labours they are often lonely, amidst hardships and stupidities and disappointments that strain their resources of courage. In their assemblies they know that they belong to each other. They look upon science as an ally, and have no sense of being foreigners in the universe which it investigates. They live and work as though they feel that they are in touch with a purpose for human nature, and that the purpose they seek to serve includes the maintenance and development of the family.*

In social work there is contact with living concrete reality, something quite different from imaginative speculations, from the merely analytical sciences, and from the world of statistics to which, some say, even the truths of physics are now to be added. The good social worker, like the good teacher or the good doctor, is obliged not only to test the value of his abstract

* Compare the type of social activity from which Mr. Aldous Huxley declares he has now made his escape. It was a life in which he was the victim of "a state of chronic apprehension" lest he should fail to keep up with "modernity," "sophistication," "culture," "art," "seeing life" and "Good Times." *Do what you will*, pp. 52-3.

knowledge in the task of helping on to healthy growth some particular real living creature or group. He has also to test his own resources of faith and hope and courage. A wonderful thing about human nature is that as soon as these resources are called upon, even amidst endless difficulties and disappointments, it is found they are unfailing in supply. It is almost as if the greater the strain upon these resources, the more boundless their reserves. Thus men and women *find themselves*, when they seek to serve others: and they show us what humanity has in it to be. The teacher begins to find himself when he is in charge of his scholars: the medical student begins to grow up when he goes to his hospital and especially, as I have often noted, when he gets a job in the children's ward: the man or woman who becomes father or mother wins a far deeper sense of the values of sex and the family. It is a kind of conversion to a fuller humanity which accompanies any serious responsibility for the development of life in others. One may almost say that until men and women have graduated by ten years or so of responsibility for others, they know the true meaning of life neither in themselves nor in others. Too many books about life are written by middle-aged men and women who are skilled with their pens but morally are still in their teens.

Most of our time, in this essay, has been spent in travelling along a dark road, lit by few gleams

THE NEW MORALITY

of faith in human nature or of hope for human destiny. We have been engaged with a type of thought which assumes that civilised humanity has lately suffered a complete inward collapse :* and that it has no strength left to sustain the values of human life in general or the values of family and sex in particular. But for those who wish to find them, there are a thousand signs of good hope. The sphere of social service is alive with hope and courage : for here there is not only a faith in human nature but an actual experience of what human nature can be and do, and of civilisation at its growing-points. Let me offer an illustration.

Before writing this chapter I took two days off and ran away to visit a new town, in the expectation, which was fully realised, of finding an example of common life in which the mechanical process of civilisation was controlled to good ends by moral and social purpose. A further expectation was realised when I found there an example of the way in which men and women, given fair play, naturally and happily devote themselves to the life of family and neighbourhood : so that the New Morality is made to seem foreign to human nature.

Some miles outside a great city, well beyond range of the greedy vortex of over-urbanisation,

* For another example of this assumption see Appendix B. The war has a good deal to answer for in all this, and no doubt it will pass.

A BETTER HOPE

twenty thousand people have settled down in the last two years, and there are more to come. An enlightened public body has developed this new building area. Charming little houses, each with its bath and with gardens back and front, pure keen air, plenty of tall old trees. A generous plan of wide roads, green spaces, children's playgrounds, sites reserved for various institutions of social and neighbourly life. Mechanisation? Plenty of it. Without it the new town could not have been built, nor could the men now live so far from their work; and so, in a hundred other ways, for example in the wireless which brings music and discourse into nearly every house on the estate, it is through and through the work of a scientific civilisation, controlled by intelligent purpose.

My friend, the social worker, whom the wise and parental policy of a certain Institution has planted at the centre of the area, seeks to serve and guide the growth of social life. He is there to do what he can to foster and co-ordinate common interests in the neighbourhood. He knows better than any one else the type of human culture which is finding itself at home in these conditions. It should be borne in mind that all the inhabitants have been gathered from over-crowded areas in the city. They have hardly had a fair chance before, to shew what they are and what they wish to be.

THE NEW MORALITY

But however near they may have been to the infection of the moral instability of the herd, they have now gained their immunity.

The whole tone of sexual morality, I was informed, is "very high indeed." Marital fidelity is an undisputed ideal. Rarely is there serious trouble in the homes. One divorce in two years.

The average of children to the family is three. "They want children, love them and are proud of them." In a few cases there are nine or ten children, and then there is great difficulty to keep home-life from running down-hill.

There is one inn on the edge of the estate. Ale is delivered at the houses. No drunkenness. A fortunate dearth of low picture-houses.

The little gardens play a happy part in the common life: five thousand of them, all shewing care. The whole family helps: the young cut the grass with scissors. Keen competition, due to the Horticultural. When all the flowers are out the roads are beautiful.

Grave trouble when the man is out of work, for the dole does little more than cover the rent. Never too much spare cash, and little left for saving. Still, the common life is removed from the demoralisations which go with abject poverty—or abject wealth: and there is much neighbourly kindness towards those who are in distress.

A BETTER HOPE

My friend has promoted a Nursing Society; a penny a week from 2,000 homes already. He is Speaker of a House of Commons, in which the members are familiar with every nicety of Parliamentary procedure; 150 members, including a sturdy band of Communists. He is busy every hour of the week; and what a life for a man! Here in spite of, or rather with the good aid of, "mechanism" (e.g. telephone indispensable) a man may serve the healthy development of life and dream of the victory of social purpose. Here he can study human nature where it has a fair opportunity to shew what is in it.

Among these plain English people the tradition of honour, in which sex and family are united by a tie of moral obligation, appears to be accepted as though it were not to be questioned. Who can doubt that the mothers seek to bring their daughters up in the same tradition, and, if they read their Shakespeare, that they hope their girls will be like Perdita and Miranda with all their grace and "honour"?*

Here, then, we have an example of a healthy and happy society which depends upon the art of home-building. The question, however, may arise whether any such society can also succeed in the art of good neighbourhood. Is there no

* In Mr. Dover Wilson's *The Essential Shakespeare* (Cambridge, 1932) it is pointed out that when the poet turned away from the life of town and Court, where he came near losing himself, and found peace at the last in the beauty of nature and all the sweet concerns of home and neighbourhood, he had a Perdita of his own in his daughter Judith.

danger to social development in an excessive devotion to the family?

We shall do well to pause on this question, for it is one that has already been put with some vigour. There are students of the earlier stages of human history who have indicated the clan and other social groups as exemplifying a wider and more generous type of friendly brotherhood than can be realised by a familial order which may be absorbed by a jealous sense of private property and an uncivil concentration on family interests. These suggestions are not without point. Do we not know, only too well, how good neighbourhood may be ruined by that which we have already described as the moral and cultural *res angusta domi*? Unfortunately, some of those who have raised these suggestions have obscured the real point by raising at the same time a cloud of suggestions in favour of sexual promiscuity. This they believe, quite without warrant, to have been a feature of primitive society. But that should not deter us from considering the real point which has been raised.*

Good neighbourhood normally depends on friendship between families. It has already been mentioned that such friendship is mediated to a large extent by the children, who learn together, play together, visit each other, and draw the

* All the more so as M. Bergson's new book (see p. 158 above) has drawn a sharp contrast between the 'closed society' typified by the family and the 'open society' of a universal brotherhood. At a first reading this dualism seems to preclude any organic evolution from the one type to the other. The mutation seems too absolute.

A BETTER HOPE

various parents together by the all-reconciling bond of a common interest in the young. This common interest acts as a kind of antiseptic on the relations between parents, and guards them against the approach of wandering sexual desires which might embroil the parents of one household with the parents of another. Close neighbourly friendship is knit by many bonds. The web would be rent to pieces by miscellaneous invitations to adultery. The fundamental way in which the limits of the family are transcended is by a friendship between families which is rooted in a silent understanding of trust and of honour.

That sex should be free and independent of family ties would be a proposal altogether fatal to our English culture of the art of neighbourhood. But neither that nor any other desperate expedient is required in order to break down the walls of a selfish family exclusiveness. The increase in cultural associations among neighbours is one of the most hopeful signs of our modern social life.* The other day, for example, a comparatively new movement, the National Society of Women's Institutes, held its first annual meeting in the Albert Hall. From 5,000 centres in the country, representatives of some 300,000 members were assembled, full of their social and cultural enthusiasms. This one assembly of people stood for 300,000 homes, cheered and interested by the women who come back each week from their

* The change since my boyhood is astonishing.

THE NEW MORALITY

friendly meetings, with new thoughts of social health and of homely crafts.

It would be easy, but this is not the place, to dilate on the most powerful of all the forces that are engaged in building up neighbourhood, the religious associations which permeate the great bulk of the body politic. My readers will remember how Goethe describes a religious group-meeting in *Wilhelm Meister* and the insight of genius by which he discerns in it the mysterious generation of a common spirit which is higher and fuller than the sum of all the individual contributions of the members. Throughout the history of religion the small group has been the refuge of men and women who seek a firmer grasp of spiritual reality and fraternity than they find in the wider and more mechanical organisations of religion.* From groups like these there has sprung the motive-power of much progress, not only religious, but also social and political. After the Reformation they helped to make many things new, and we need only think of the Quakers to-day to see how groups of families may transcend the limitations of the family and give forth a stream of healing and inspiring initiative, both social and international. Compared to this stream, the initiative of all the enemies of the family put together is rather less than a drop in a bucket.

The problem of wider and more generous

* This point has been well taken in his own way by Mr. Gerald Heard.

neighbourhood is moving towards a solution. The solution will owe much to the means provided by a mechanical civilisation which conquers distance and enables people to meet. People, even in the depths of the country, join now with others in the rivalry of musical and other competitions, music especially binding together all classes of the village populations in the deep-felt joy of a common love of beauty. The great provincial towns are honeycombed or catacombed with voluntary associations, most of them aiming at some aspect of the ideal, whether philanthropic or social or artistic or scientific. Do many of my readers know from experience the good neighbourhood which is found in our Friendly Societies or in the Royal and Ancient Order of Buffaloes ! Their membership runs into millions. In all such groupings the soil is only waiting to be cultivated by a finer quality of leadership, in order to bear its best fruits.

The topic thus touched is endless in interest and in extent. We are watching the growing-points of our civilisation when we see an enrichment of neighbourhood pour its refreshing stream into the life of the family, and when we see the family, thus refreshed, developing its essential gifts to purify and warm all the forces of neighbourhood. Any one who has had the privilege of sharing in the normal life of the English people is inclined to sink through the floor with shame when he glances at the morbid

THE NEW MORALITY

sex literature which represents our life of home and neighbourhood as heading away from all this upspringing culture and running downhill to the morass. I do not forget the existence either of Basmond or of the Grand Hotel du Monde.* But they are not England; only the ragged margins of society which every good citizen wants to trim off. Once the world were set free from military, political and economic nationalism, the new era of social health and welfare need not be so very far away. There will still be evil enough in the world to keep the stern moralist busy: but wise men know that the way of goodwill is to welcome and help every effort of positive renewal.

* See p. 231 above.

CHAPTER XIX

A BETTER HOPE—*continued.*

THE reciprocal action of family and neighbourhood is the way to the fulfilment of both. Let us now turn once more to our principal theme, the health and development of the family itself. It would be foolish and fanatical to imagine that the high purposes of the family may be left to unfold themselves by a process of mechanical evolution. The purpose of good needs an imaginative faith to grasp it, and a disciplined loyalty to hold it. Though the tendency is naturally *given*, the fulfilment is not given. The social changes and the novel complexities of the age put an undoubted strain upon the traditional form of the family and challenge it to develop its inner resources. Only by an increase of intelligence and goodwill can its potentialities be grasped and brought to the birth.

In regard to the future, our view is in direct contradiction to the view of the New Morality, and above all in respect of the "liberation of women." Far from portending the destruction of the family and an era of unlimited sexual freedom, this liberation is likely to be the means of an improvement in the ethical quality of family life. Its most striking effect is an advance

THE NEW MORALITY

in the harmonisation of the various relationships within the family. The former *distance* between husband and wife, between parent and child, which was encouraged by a stiff sort of legalism, tends to dwindle in the new atmosphere of comradeship.* The old impulses and relationships—parental, connubial, fraternal, filial—remain in all their variety. The family is still the model of a good world where there are the strong and the weak and the equal in strength, and all, after their kind, contribute to the common stock of life. But the great sentiment of family, which animates and moderates this unity-in-variety of affections and duties, now finds its old element of hardness being melted by the infusion of a finer spirit of comradeship. The loyal wife and mother, of our ancient tradition of the home, can now be herself and radiate her influence through the home more powerfully and fruitfully than ever before.

Even quite stupid men have lost their terror at the sight of an educated woman, and the more intelligent men rejoice in the resources of married comradeship that are opened up by the education of women. Let me mention one illustration of this comradeship: not that the comradeship is really new, but that it is new in the encouragement that it receives from the culture of our times.

* See p. 45 above.

A BETTER HOPE

The other day I was talking to a very old friend who has spent her life in theoretical and practical study of social and economic life and now ranks among the experts. Her studies have brought her into close contact with life in most of the lands of Europe and, in a special way, with life in India. In our conversation she described the way in which life is approached by the young wives whom she met on board ship during her journeys to and from India. Times are not easy for English folk in India. These young wives knew what was in store for them. But they were going out as good comrades, equal and true comrades. They were quite aware that their husbands, for example in the Civil Service, had very hard and anxious work and that life was nothing like the happy alternation of beer and skittles so often described in Anglo-Indian novels. In their relations to their husbands they were comrade-lovers going out to share a whole life together. I asked about their attitude towards sex. The answer was "absolutely healthy and absolutely frank."

As to the men who have the chance of getting such wives, and who revere the beneficent figure of the loyal wife and mother, they will no doubt learn to make it a point of honour in the man to be worthy of these women of honour, and to help them in training the young. If husbands or wives were agreed that there was no harm in adultery, then fathers and mothers

THE NEW MORALITY

would only make themselves ridiculous if they tried to persuade their children that there was any harm in a virtual promiscuity before marriage. But a father and mother who are united on the principle that sex is sacred to life-comradeship, will do their best to teach children that their mates are waiting for them somewhere, and that they should hope their future mates will keep themselves, body and soul, for their life-comrades. If this were taught and observed, then boys and girls could think of the unknown mates as hoping the same of them, and of *trusting* them for this. What a happiness to look forward to the day when each could say to the other "To your trust I bring my honour!"

Men have always revered the wife and mother of tradition. It is strange to think how often they have been able to conceal from themselves the deep wound which they have inflicted on the personality of woman when they "pour her treasure in another's lap." Too often also they have ignored the instinctive sense of having suffered an affront, when their wives, though forgiving, discover with distress what their husbands were before they were married. Such is the blind injustice which has characterised the régime of the dominant male.

But now, with the liberation of women, we look for better things from men. Justice demands that *either* they surrender the tradition of the home *or* they adopt as their own that ideal

A BETTER HOPE

of integrity which they salute when it is realised by women.

Of other grounds of hope for the life of the family, a few more may be quoted. The influence of one disposition of family life upon another has already been mentioned in the crucial example of the influence of parenthood on sex. A similar complication of natural impulses has always been seen in the big sister who mothers the baby or the big brother who protects the little one like a father. It is a mark of the new comradeship that the fraternal and filial impulses work together in the growing son who becomes the friend of his father by a friendship that is among the major glories of human life. So, too, in great beauty, the mother, now keeping her youth far longer than was usual even fifty years ago, runs about with her big son and shares his interests as a sister. When a boy has a comrade-mother who shares his confidence, he is saved from the illusion that sex is a thing apart from those joys and responsibilities with which it is interwoven in the life of his mother.

Once more, a growth of equal friendship between brother and sister helps men and women, as they grow up, to extend its character of care and consideration to other women and men. Thus they learn to rejoice in a free comradeship which has the charm of sex, though it excludes those actions and closest intimacies which are reserved for lovers who entrust their whole

THE NEW MORALITY

lives to each other. It is one of the chief losses caused by the wilfully small family that boys and girls grow up without being trained by home experience to be close friends with the opposite sex in an easy and natural way which is free from subservience to sexual excitement. It is a point of high social culture that men and women should be able to enjoy the bright influence of sex without slavery to carnal desire. It is, I think, a point of honour which true women love to find and trust in the men who have learnt what is meant by taking care of a sister.

It need hardly be added that it is in confidential comradeship between parents and children that sex-instruction finds its only proper sphere. There are still parents who are afraid to give this training to their children: thus falling behind the example of the savages, who use what light they have to train their children. But already in this country the matter goes much better than ever before: though many failures of the home make it urgent that other agencies should be at hand. Many parents need help that they may learn how to carry out their duty.

Other burning questions such as divorce and birth-control no less clearly depend on the spirit of the home. In regard to divorce, there can be little doubt of the existence of marriages whose mere continuance is a grave and damaging offence against the name and fame of all family life. On the other hand there exists a class of

persons whose use of divorce brings wanton hurt and indignity upon the whole institution of marriage. Society needs protection against such anti-social behaviour and may well require that it be subjected to certain legal and social sanctions.*

The vexed question of birth-control will find its solution in the development of the moral and social spirit of the family. In the long run it will be, as it is in so many other fields of social life, a question between a use of mechanism that is controlled by moral purpose and a use of mechanism in ignorance or defiance of any such control. In this particular example the lack of moral purpose would lead to race-suicide.

Though the problems of the family may be many and hard, in every case we seem to be thrown back on our hope of the good that will come from the freedom of women. The higher culture of our time makes possible a beneficent action and re-action between the life of the family and the

* One obvious ground is that instability of marriage is a fertile source of crime. Two American investigators have lately found that out of 500 young criminals 25 per cent. came from homes broken by separation, divorce or desertion. The matter is very serious in U.S.A., where in 1929 for every 100,000 of the population there were nearly 166 divorces as against 7.5 in England and Wales (see *More Essays of Love and Virtue*, p. 39). The problem of divorce is very thorny and difficult. The crux of the matter is the welfare of the home and, therefore, of the woman; for after all, it is the woman more than the man who builds and guards the life of the home. A lady well-known in public life has lately written in a newspaper: "We lose our looks and attractions, and if it is easy and respectable for men to change their life's partner, many a middle-aged woman will find her husband and home gone from her." There are still men who hold with the Rabbi Aquiba (end of first century A.D.) that a man may seek divorce from his wife "if he find another woman more beautiful."

THE NEW MORALITY

life of society in general. A fuller experience and a finer activity in public life raises the influence of women in the home. On the other hand, the better and more intelligent their lives in the capacity of wives and mothers, the greater their power to get to the heart of social life and all its problems. The growth in women's influence, already great but hardly yet appreciated, will be the determining factor in the formation of public opinion on the value of the family and on the true direction of its future development.

It is often feared that danger may lie in the very strength of the parental impulse in women, which may lead them to cosset their children and send them out soft into life. But the existence of the greatest political experiment in history, the British Commonwealth of Nations, has depended from the first and must always depend on mothers who train children for duty. "How brave you all are!" said Mrs. Page to a lady who had three sons in the war, and was answered, "They belong to their country: we can't do anything else." And so Mr. Page, the American Ambassador in 1916* :—

"I suppose 1,000 English women have been to see me—as a last hope—to ask me to have inquiries made in Germany about their 'missing' sons or husbands, generally sons. They are of every class and rank and kind, from marchioness to scrub-woman.

* *Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* (Heinemann, 1923), vol. II, p. 146. Mr. Page foresaw with sympathy the burden that was to come to the thousands of maidens whom the war was to rob of their mates and the disturbance of the balance of the sexes which has caused so much social instability.

A BETTER HOPE

Every one tells her story with the same dignity of grief, the same marvellous self-restraint, the same courtesy and deference and sorrowful pride."

Thus during war our women could suffer in the old Roman way. Thus, too, I have read, the Hebrew mother in ancient times hoped that the child she carried might be born to go forth as the saviour of her people; often a warlike hope, but something more was here. It is that something more for which we look to the family in the coming Age, so that children may be trained up to be of that "saving class of people to whom life becomes a bore unless they can help somebody."* There are few of us who have any pure impulse to help and to build, who do not trace it back to our parents.

Such an education of the children for public duty and service saves the family itself from the ever besetting danger of narrowness and stagnation. But the creative influence of the sentiment of family on social life is no new thing. As Dr. McDougall observed, the parental instinct has been a principal motive of many of the great humanitarian reforms which distinguish the nineteenth century from all other centuries. In earlier centuries fatherhood was largely identified with the responsibility for keeping social life in order: but in the nineteenth century men as well as women have become eager to act upon the "tender protective emotion" of the parent. The

* W. H. Page, "Life, etc." *ut supra*, vol. I, p. 334.

THE NEW MORALITY

earlier ideas of law and justice, which too often meant a harsh retribution for offences against property, have been refined and enlarged till they include an almost pastoral care for the reform of the criminal. The administration of Justice has been affected by the temper of parental care. It is one of the oddest caprices of recent criticism that the institution of fatherhood has been made the object of reckless and savage attack, just when the sterner type of moralist is bewailing the lack of family discipline and when the harsher type of patriarchal rule is disappearing not only from the family, but also from the State. The modern State is influenced in every civilised land by a regard for the education of the young, for the care of the sick, the poor and the weak, for the encouragement of the useful and the good, which is without any parallel in earlier centuries. The new social conscience of our time arises through the liberation of the impulse of care for others and especially for all who are in need. It is in harmony with this idea of parental care that the League of Nations has recognised the "sacred trust" committed to the nations that they should take care for the development of the weaker or more backward races in the family of mankind.*

So, too, I think, the historian could shew how the idea of Fraternity, starting from its roots in the family, has spread abroad to influence

* For the same temper in recent anthropology, see p. 81 above.

far wider relationships. Let us leave to one side, powerful as they have been in European history, the religious ideas of universal brotherhood. Independently of these religious ideas, though often closely fused with them in actual life and thought, the idea of human brotherhood, based on a common possession of Reason, has come down in a clear line from the Stoics to the eighteenth century. It is of great interest that in the bright dawn of the French Revolution, before the clouds began to gather, the enthusiasts of a better hope included in their slogan not only Liberty and Equality but something deeper which they called Fraternity.

Nor can the whole world of loyalties, social and political, be given a truer source than in the filial dispositions that grow in the life of the family.*

At a time when we are threatened by a system of morality which would mean the end of the family, considerations such as these have an interest for those who desire to serve the development of social life. It is clear that the principle of social care wells up from deep fountains within the natural family and has spread abroad with fertilising power over far wider fields of life.

* I find that the followers of the great sociologist Le Play are convinced that the substance of all personal relationships tends to take shape from the family model. When people meet, their relationships fall into some variety of form which belongs to the system of the family. I have received much kindness and help from the officers of the Le Play House (65, Belgrave Road, Westminster, S.W.1), where Papers on the Family prepared for an International Conference on Social Work and the Family may be had on application.

THE NEW MORALITY

Our study of the New Morality has made clear the main issue at stake : Are we to surrender our tradition of the family, and in particular the moral ideal of the honour of the wife and mother ? The regard of great men for their mothers has become a proverb. It has lately been illustrated by the words which the Earl of Balfour, statesman and thinker, left behind him, to be read when he was gone. Of all the debts, he wrote, which he had incurred in his life, none was to be compared with the debt he owed to the wisdom and goodness of his mother. There is a note in that "goodness" which stirs an echo in every reader's heart.

Our social structure is raised on a great arch of trust and honour. The arch is not too steady in all its constituent parts. Commercial and international honour need re-facing and grouting. The keystone of the arch is compacted of two kinds of honour, marital and parental, bound together in the person of the parent, and above all in the person of the wife and mother of the family. It is the aim of the New Morality to dissolve the moral cement which binds these two elements together. If the effort were successful, the keystone would fall out and the arch would collapse.

Logically, it is easy to analyse this unity into parts and to separate the two elements of sex and parenthood. Mechanically the separation has become much more easy than it was. Morally

it would cut the central nerve of family life by a fatal vivisection. Whether the social conscience of the nation is prepared to assist in this surgical operation is the stake at issue. There may indeed be men who would lower the standard of women's honour to the level which they have hitherto accepted for men but rejected for women. But it is unlikely that the vast majority of men will be content to let go their ideal of the wife and mother. There may be women who actively seek to haul down the flag of their tradition. That is the crucial point of the argument we have discussed, the argument from the psychology of women and especially from the revolutionary consequences of the liberation of women. But I cannot believe that this extraordinary view of the psychology of women has, even in the mind of its sponsors, any more force than that of a merely dialectical point. It is of a piece with the logical argument which leads, as we have seen, to the withering of all values.

It is a needless mistake to imagine that the moral instability, which followed the dreadful disturbance of war, is endemic or chronic. Now that a generation is growing up that has not been afflicted by the war-mania and its accompanying sex-mania, even our gloomier prophets may hope that the young will be wiser than their elders. A social philosopher* has lately said that it is the young to-day who realise the need for stability

* Prof. Zimmern.

THE NEW MORALITY

and order in life, whether social or international. He believes they are turning away from the elderly mentors who still try to galvanise into life the doctrines of an old-fashioned libertarianism. If one may venture to add a testimony based on evidence gathered from various Universities, the young men and women who will soon have a powerful voice in the making of public opinion have a real concern for the needs of the nation and of the world. Most of them, nowadays, would never reach the University without sacrifice on the part of their people at home. This means that they come from good homes, and, as a rule, they are not unmindful of their breeding or of the duty of serving in their turn.

We may look no less confidently for signs of hope even among those who are younger still. A few nights ago I attended a great gathering of Girl Guides. The Chief Guide was there, having lately been round the world. She told her young audience that their International was nearing the million mark and there were two millions of Scouts. The company of Guides was started twenty years ago by those who foresaw the new freedom that was coming to women. The youngsters were to be prepared for it by learning purpose and responsibility. So too in India, the wiser women, who have seen, even in the last two years, a startling advance in the freedom of women, are taking up the methods of the Guides, so that they may

A BETTER HOPE

prepare the Indian girls for a good use of freedom. All over the world this company brings the voice of joy and health into the dwellings of the people. When these children of many nations meet in their rallies, there is no International Problem. "They don't know the difference." They belong to each other in one family.

My readers will, no doubt, be familiar with this or some other good comradeship of the young. Their leaders, all over the world, are mostly wage-earners, who gladly give their leisure to the cause. Both leaders and led are living in the consciousness of a purpose of life which is greater than any or all of them. They are taught to look for it in home and neighbourhood, in country and humanity. This purpose they joyfully serve. To the new generation of children the thought of purpose in life comes, when they get it, as natural as their mother's milk. Such children are helping to generate the culture which will use, and not surrender to, the forces of mechanism. These forces made shell-holes in Flanders, but the wounds are being healed by young grass. The war has left scars on the race : but the children are growing up.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RATIONALISM AND MECHANISM

THE philosophical background of Mr. Russell's New Morality is revealed to us in his *Scientific Outlook*,* where the claim is made that an "unyielding" rationalism "has a better faith and a more unbending optimism than any of the timid seekers after the childish comforts of a less adult age" (p. 138). The social aspect of this optimism we have already reviewed. Let us now glance briefly at its rationalistic aspect.

The modern phase of rationalism appears to be based on mechanism. It is sternly opposed to the "timid seekers" who believe there is something in life and mind which is beyond the range of mechanical interpretation. The confidence of rationalism is supported by the progress of science, which has won great triumphs by using the methods of physics and chemistry. The progress of science does not "afford any evidence that the behaviour of living matter is governed by anything other than the laws of physics and chemistry" (p. 128). That there is no getting beyond this is a conclusion the truth of which is "irresistibly suggested" by the work that has been done in recent times (p. 134). Not only living matter but also living mind is brought within the scope of this conclusion. The human will may turn out to be a "mere concomitant" of a chain of physical causes, and "what we call our thoughts" may turn out to be just "ingredients of the complexes" that are nowadays studied by physics (p. 131). If we look a little further into the "near future," it may very well be that by the application of science to the human embryo the whole human race can be rendered intelligent within one generation (p. 176). Such is the

* Allen & Unwin, 1931.

APPENDIX A

optimism of the rationalist and such the coming triumph of mechanism.

So far, then, the hero of the drama is the master of science as a practical worker. The part for which he is cast is that of the Controller of matter and life and mind. But he is a hero only for a while. Before the end of the play he turns out to be the villain of the piece.

I

THE triumphs of applied science are represented in glowing colours when the author desires to attack the faith in any meaning or purpose whether in life or in the universe as a whole. This is the faith which normally lies at the root of practical hope, as conceived by the social worker and by others who take a constructive view of such human affairs as those of the family. It is the kind of faith which "recent advances in science" tend to re-establish. Such at any rate is the testimony of the "bulk of eminent physicists and a number of eminent biologists" (p. 105). But the idea of an ultimate meaning or purpose in the universe as a whole, or life in particular, appears to the rationalist as a culpable heresy.

In order to combat the testimony of these heretical scientists he takes two courses. First, he takes his stand on the mechanical principles of working science. The faith of the rationalist is that the practical success of these principles or rules of technique justifies him in doubting the reality of anything which cannot be dealt with by these rules. We may think that we live by admiration, hope and love, but the fact is that these things don't come within the rules, or on the other hand it may be that they will soon be shewn to come within the rules, and then they won't be what they seem.

But, secondly, though the trumpet of defiance against "infantile fantasies" may be loud in tone, it is far from being clear. Something seems to have got into the instrument which gives it a quavering voice. The trouble comes from modern physics. There was a time

APPENDIX A

when the rationalist looked to physics as a tower of defence for the mechanical philosophy. But physics, which alone, as yet, has approached the perfection of the scientific ideal (p. 59) has now lost credit as a guide to the nature of reality. Its life has been destroyed by the "cold breath of scepticism" which has been "generated by the skill of the men of science" (pp. 103-4). The physicists have "turned traitor." "They no longer believe in matter" (p. 82). They have withdrawn the ground from under the feet of the philosophic rationalist. A number of eminent scientists even go so far as to allow that life and the universe may have some meaning or unity or purpose! In return for this allowance they receive allowances of another kind. They enter on the primrose path that leads to decorative and financial rewards,* and they "become more and more determined supporters of the injustice and obscurantism upon which our social system is based" (p. 103).

Where, then, does the rationalist stand to-day? He is obliged to retire from the old position of dogmatic mechanism. The only position available is to take a stand with the men who are at work in the laboratory and the practical men who get results. These men are not affected by the collapse of theoretical or philosophical mechanism. They still believe in physics and chemistry as the way to *power*. They are not concerned with the way to ultimate truth. They are untouched and unmoved by the scepticism of great physicists.

II

But the rationalist, having thus taken his stand with the men of practical science, turns round upon them in anger and contempt. These practical men, whose

* In the pay, perhaps, of those wicked Bishops! "Russian Communists are suspicious and hostile to the progress of modern physics; they see in the great contemporary discoveries of physical science a bourgeois reaction unfavourable to materialism. They call Einstein and Planck representatives of bourgeois science—even of clericalism." (*The Russian Revolution*, by Nicholas Berdyaev; Sheed and Ward, 1931).

APPENDIX A

science leads to power, are held responsible for the deplorable condition of modern civilisation. The physicist can no longer love the world, for he doubts its existence. "Disappointed as the lover of nature, the man of science is becoming its tyrant" (p. 272). "The scientific society of the future, as we have been imagining it, is one in which the power-impulse has completely overwhelmed the impulse of love" (p. 273). "The leaders of the modern world are drunk with power" (p. 274). "Edison, Rockefeller, Lenin . . . were men devoid of culture." "Traditional wisdom had no place in their thoughts and feelings: mechanism and organisation were what interested them" (p. 276). Hence the dwindling twilight of all higher values.

Thus the man of science who gets results is by no means the hero when the book ends. The theoretical scientist who allows a place in the universe for religion, and the practical scientist who works for power, both come under the lash. The attack is not only concerned with the theoretical scepticism of the former or the practical rationalism of the latter, but also with the lack of moral character in both!

There are some valuable pages on science in *The Scientific Outlook* and a few eloquent passages in plea for æsthetic values. The idea of a scientific or mechanical or rationalistic civilisation which was used by the earlier book in the interests of sexual freedom seems now to be regarded with bitter disgust. The "advance of civilisation" is represented as an approach to something like a hell of mechanism and a cold fire which melts all values down to nothing. But, though there are some good words on behalf of æsthetic value as against all this barbarous mechanisation, there is no such word for the family, nor any hint of a system of sex-life other than promiscuity.

The chief difficulty, however, of this new philosophy, is to understand how any experience of value, moral or æsthetic or intellectual, could be reconciled with its metaphysics. The universe is seen as an ultimate

APPENDIX A

anarchy. The idea that it has any sort of unity is "rubbish" (p. 98). This is made explicit on p. 101. "In metaphysics my creed is short and simple. I think that the external world may be an illusion, but if it exists, it consists of events, short, small and haphazard. Order, unity, and continuity are human inventions." This, of course, is a philosophy that takes the tang of reality out of every experience of value. In such a universe there could be no life or growth, no law, scientific or otherwise, no value or beauty, no moral or spiritual purpose. In such an Anarchism there is comfort only for the Rationalist, who is ready to accept any position which enables him to defy the advocates of purpose, and for the New Moralist who may seek a metaphysical backing for the moral "anarchism" of sex. The New Philosophy with its incoherent rabble of "events" is the counterpart of the New Morality with its incoherent rabble of "impulses." The old Greek thought of a harmony of elements in the universe reflected by a harmony of impulses in the mind is discarded by the rationalist along with other childish comforts of a less adult age. The universe is like a snowstorm on a gusty day: everything whirling about. In an earlier book the author characterised Thought as anarchic and lawless.* In *Marriage and Morals* Love is an anarchic force. Now at last the dark cloud of anarchy has engulfed the entire universe.

But there is no real comfort in these rather desperate philosophical expedients. It might be fairly safe for the rationalist to play fast and loose with the Moral Order, but it is the suicide of rationalism to anarchise the Cosmic Order.

* Quoted in *The Making of the Modern Mind*, J. H. Randall (Allen & Unwin).

APPENDIX B

MORALITY AND PSYCHOLOGY

IN *Do What You Will* (Chatto and Windus), Mr. Aldous Huxley seems to be searching for a philosophical justification of the mood which inspires the "advanced" novel of sexual freedom. We have seen that Mr. Russell disapproves of the sexual grossness of the characters in Mr. Huxley's own novels. Mr. Walter Lippmann (*Preface to Morals*, pp. 303-4), regards these same novels as studies in "debauchery," their characters being "absorbed in the pursuit of sexual satisfaction." To the creator of these characters "love is at times only a sort of obscene joke." Those of us who have not read the novels may be content with the chapter entitled "Fashions in Love" in *Do What You Will*. Here the author shows that his studies in debauchery have led to the conclusion that a cold promiscuity freezes the life of sex. He, therefore, seeks a psychological formula which may justify sexual freedom and help people to avoid the loss of sexual vitality. The chapter on "Fashions in Love" contains no suggestion that love implies any care or consideration for the beloved. Such a suggestion would apparently have no interest for the "critical intelligence of post-Nietzschean youth," for whose benefit the author propounds a new and "elegant" fashion in "love."

This type of New Morality depends on two principles :
(1) *Our desires are equal in value.* The only thing that matters is the "totality of our psychological experiences." Each of these "experiences," every mood or impulse or desire, is "as good as any other," and all are to be satisfied, "even the bad, even the mean." The impulse to save a drowning man is on the same moral level as the impulse to cheat at cards.

APPENDIX B

This is the "psychological" version of the witches' chant in *Macbeth*: fair is foul, and foul is fair. There is no difference between good and evil: or between true and false, for "science is no 'truer' than lunacy" (p. 3). As we are not sure there is any such thing as "personality," no one need be troubled by ideas of responsibility for oneself or for others. "Psychology" just advises us to satisfy our desires.

(2) *All our desires are to be satisfied excessively*; so long, that is, as we do not exhaust our powers of desire. Moreover, an æsthetic justice demands fair play for every one of our desires. All these reflexes have the same value. The levers which release them must be pulled one after the other. It is like machine-minding in a factory. This is the "worship of life" and its easy mechanical formula is the *Equilibrium of Balanced Excesses* (p. 279). To-day an excess of lust: to-morrow an excess of chastity; drunk to-night: sober in the morning.

In order to fit the post-Nietzschean youth for his career as a "life-worshipper," a course of education is prescribed. First, he is to be "well born and well bred." Secondly, he is to go to a Public School (p. 295) and learn the routine lessons of duty and honour. Thirdly, at the University, he is to unlearn these lessons and thus to be prepared for a "full and harmonious life" of passionate excess. Unfortunately, such a life would lead to "social disaster" if lived in public. But disaster may be evaded if the life-worshipper calls to mind his Public School drill and fulfils the ordinary round of social duties, wearing the mask of convention. When he is off duty he can throw away the mask and be his own splendid self. Withdrawing from society to some clandestine retreat he can let loose in private a tornado of passionate excess and satisfy his "visceral" emotions, "doing what he wills" to do (p. 125).

Whatever be the nature of these mysterious orgies, they are not for everyone; they are for the cultured few who have been cured of morality by the prescriptions

APPENDIX B

of "psychology." Other people are to be kept in order by "the police and superstition" (p. 284). Only the life-worshipper is free.

This figure of the free man, the new aristocrat, recalls the "democratic" figure of the many-headed monster in Plato's *Republic*. The "worship of life" is no new invention. It is as old as the hills. Its Psychology of "foul is fair" and its Equilibrium of Excesses were shown up long ago by Plato. Here is a picture of the hero of many a modern novel :*

"Then he will establish a fashion of equality between pleasure and pleasure in this life. Each as it comes has the authority of the lot behind it, and, until he is satisfied, he surrenders to it the rule over himself and then passes it on to another. He dishonours none, and encourages all alike."

"Certainly."

"And this is his life," I said. "Day after day he gratifies the pleasures as they come—now fluting down the primrose path of wine, now given over to teetotalism and banting ; one day in hard training, the next slacking and idling, and the third playing the philosopher. . . . He knows no order or necessity in life ; but he calls life as he conceives it pleasant and free and divinely blessed, and is ever faithful to it."

The next stage in Socrates' argument shews how this "democratic" soul becomes the easy prey of the "mighty and winged drone" of sexual lust.

* Plato, *Republic*, p. 561.

